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Merry

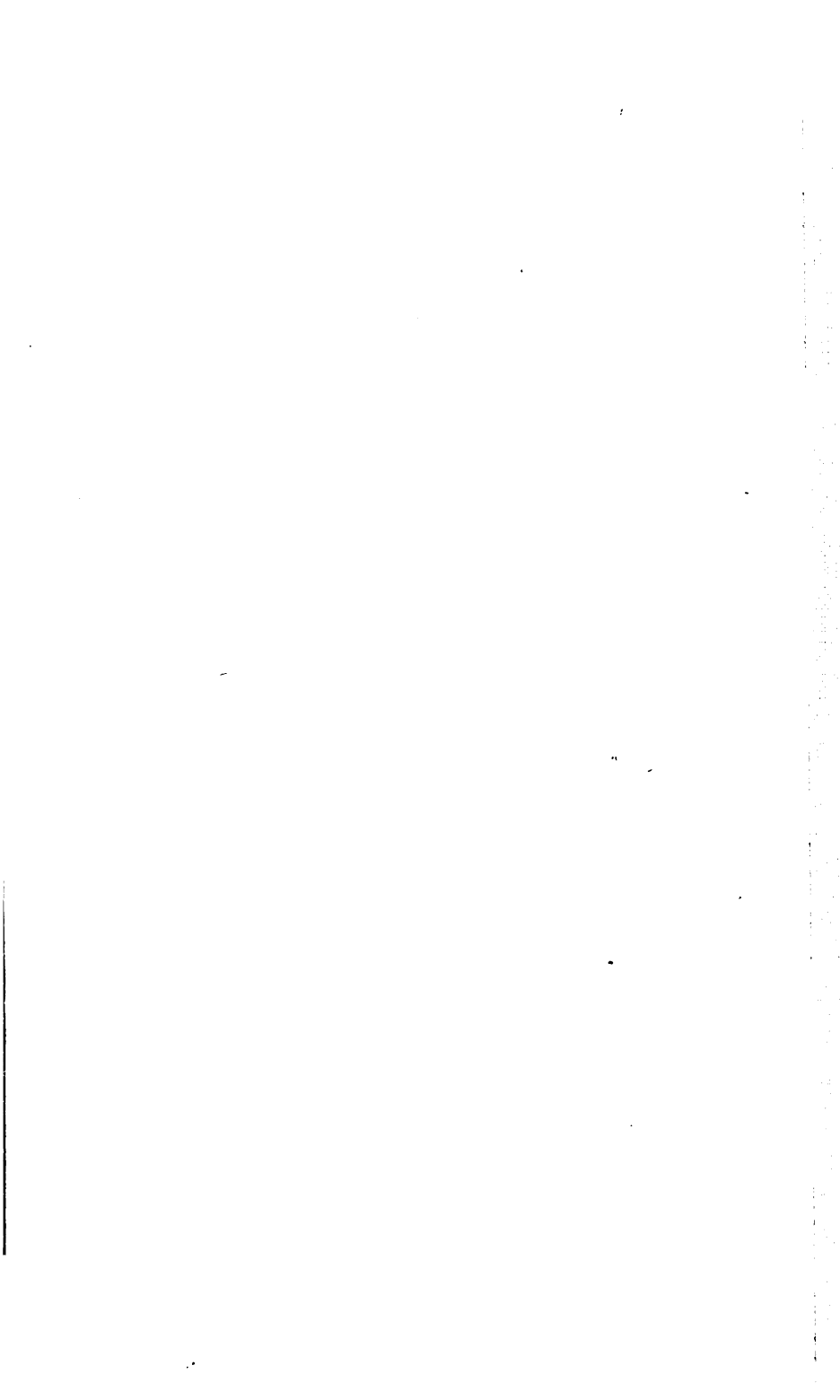
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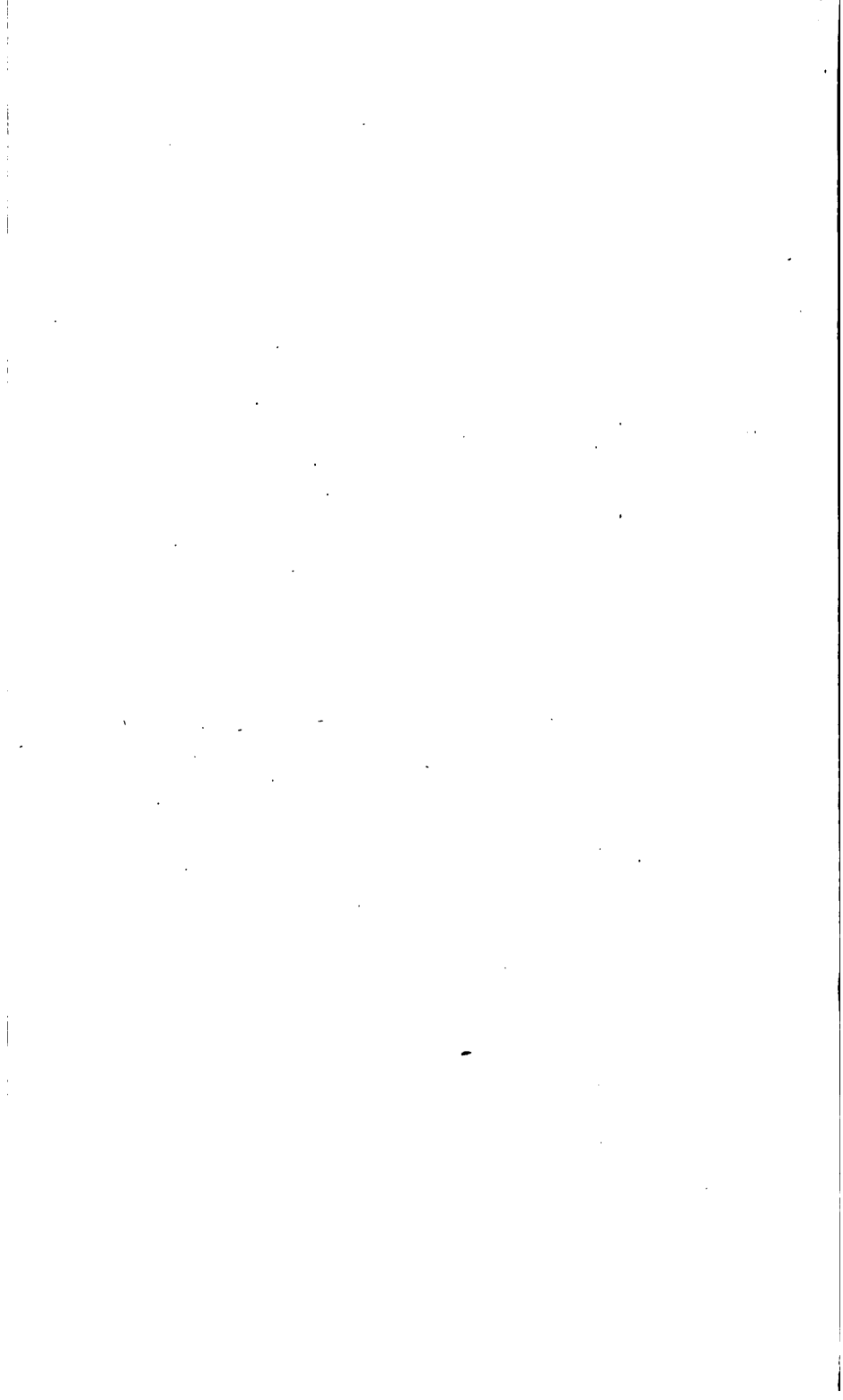
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Merry

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THE
FIRST SKETCH
OF
SHAKESPEARE'S
MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.



THE FIRST SKETCH
OF
SHAKESPEARE'S
MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

EDITED BY
JAMES ORCHARD HALLIWELL, ESQ.

F.R.S., HON. M.R.I.A., F.S.A., F.R.A.S., &c.

Φασι δε και Αρατον πυθεσθαι αυτου [Τιμωνος], πως την 'Ομηρου ποιησιν
ασφαλως κτησαιτο· τον δε ειπειν, Ει τοις αρχαιοις αντιγραφοις εντυγχανοι,
και μη τοις ηδη διωρθωμενοις.

Diog. Laert., lib. ix., in vit. Timon.



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INTRODUCTION.

Early in the last century, eighty-six years after the death of Shakespeare, an unsuccessful comedy was produced at Drury Lane Theatre, under the title of “The Comical Gallant.” This play was heralded forth in the bills of the day as the work of Mr. John Dennis, but it was merely an alteration of the “Merry Wives of Windsor,”* and a very poor attempt at an improvement of that admirable comedy. The author of this performance, however, was sufficiently well satisfied with its merits to undertake the expence of printing it; and it was accordingly published in the year 1702, with a long dedicatory epistle, from which I make the following extract, putting in Italics those portions of it to which

* The *dramatis personæ* are much the same as in the Merry Wives, except that Dennis has added one new character, the Host of the Bull, who is brother to Mrs. Ford; and Fenton is represented as nephew to Mrs. Ford. Dennis has rewritten about half of the dialogue, and materially changed the conduct of the piece.—See Genest’s “Account of the English Stage,” 8vo., Bath, 1832, vol. ii., p. 248.

I more particularly wish to direct the reader's attention :—

“ When I first communicated the design which I had of altering this comedy of Shakespear, I found that I should have two sorts of people to deal with, who would equally endeavour to obstruct my success. The one believed it to be so admirable, that nothing ought to be added to it; the others fancied it to be so despicable, that any one's time would be lost upon it. That this comedy was not despicable, I guess'd for several reasons; First, *I knew very well* that it had pleas'd one of the greatest queens that ever was in the world, great not only for her wisdom in the arts of government, but for her knowledge of polite learning, and her nice taste of the drama, for such a taste we may be sure she had, by the relish which she had of the ancients. *This comedy was written at her command, and by her direction, and she was so eager to see it acted, that she commanded it to be finished in fourteen days; and was afterwards, as tradition tells us, very well pleas'd at the representation.* In the second place, in the reign of King Charles the Second, when people had an admirable taste of comedy, all those men of extraordinary parts, who were the ornaments of that court, as the late Duke of Buckingham, my Lord Normandy, my Lord Dorset, my late Lord Rochester, Sir Charles Sidley, Dr. Frazer, Mr. Savil, Mr. Buckley, were in love with the beauties of this comedy. In the third place, I thought that after so long an acquaintance as I had with the best comic poets, among the ancients and moderns, I might depend in some measure upon my own judgment, and I thought I found here three or four extraordinary characters, that were exactly drawn, and truly comical; and that I saw besides in it some as happy touches as ever were in comedy. Besides I had observed what success the character of Falstaff had had in the First Part of ‘ Harry the Fourth.’ And as the Falstaff in the ‘ Merry Wives’ is certainly superior to that of the Second Part of ‘ Harry the Fourth,’ so it can hardly be said to be inferior to that of the First.”

This is the earliest notice we have of the above curious tradition, and that Dennis has correctly reported it

I see no reason whatever to doubt. The reader will observe that he gives no special reason *why* the queen commanded Shakespeare to write this comedy; and I believe it is this point that the subsequent narrators of the tradition have amplified without proper authority. In the prologue to the "Comical Gallant," reference is again made to it—

"But Shakespear's play in fourteen days was writ,
And in that space to make all just and fit,^b
Was an attempt surpassing human wit.
Yet our great Shakespeare's matchless muse was such,
None ere in so small a time perform'd so much."

Rowe, in 1709, gives rather a more circumstantial account. Speaking of Queen Elizabeth, he says, "She was so well pleased with that admirable character of Falstaff, in the two parts of Henry IV., that she commanded him to continue it for one play more, and to show him in love: this is said to be the occasion of his writing the 'Merry Wives of Windsor.' How well she was obeyed, the play itself is an admirable proof."^c This evidence was followed by Gildon's account of the same tradition,^d who, in 1710, jumbled an allusion to

^b Dryden calls the *Merry Wives* a comedy "exactly formed." See his "Essay of Dramatick Poesie," 4to., Lond., 1668, p. 47; and Langbaine's "Account of the English Dramatick Poets," 8vo., Oxford, 1691, p. 459.

^c Rowe's *Life of Shakespeare*, 8vo., Lond., 1709, p. 8—9.

^d Mr. Knight (*Library Edition of Shakespeare*, vol. iii., p. 8) says that Rowe adopted the more circumstantial tradition from Gildon. He had probably forgotten that Rowe's account was published some time *before* Gildon wrote.

the amended play with an anecdote that properly belongs exclusively to the sketch, in the following words—
“ The fairies in the fifth act make a handsome compliment to the queen, in her palace of Windsor, who had obliged him to write a play of Sir John Falstaff in love, and which *I am very well assured* he performed in a fortnight ; a prodigious thing, when all is so well contrived, and carried on without the least confusion.”*
It will be perceived that, although Gildon is in fact somewhat less circumstantial than Rowe, yet Elizabeth could not very well have commanded Shakespeare to exhibit the celebrated fat knight in love, if she had not been previously introduced to him in another character. Pope, Theobald, and later editors, appear to have taken their versions of the tradition second-hand from Rowe.

I have been thus particular in placing before the reader an account of the authorities upon which this tradition must be received, because much of our reasoning on a very interesting subject of inquiry connected with the criticism on the “ Merry Wives of Windsor” will be found to depend, in a great measure, on the degree of credit we may be disposed to give to it. I cannot but think that there must be *some* foundation for it ; and we cannot be far wrong, after citing the above authorities, in giving reasonable credit to them, and believing that the first sketch of the “ Merry Wives of Windsor” was written at the request of Queen Elizabeth, and in a very short space of time. So far I

* Gildon’s “ Remarks on the Plays of Shakespeare,” published in the supplemental volume to Rowe’s Shakespeare, 8vo., Lond., 1710, p. 291.

fully believe, but I am inclined to think that Rowe must have guessed at the *reason* of the royal command, and given us his gratuitous explanation of the imperfect anecdote related by Dennis. Nothing can be more probable than this supposition; and, to say the least, it would be very unsafe to take Rowe's narrative for granted, and reason upon it in the way in which Malone does. I would rather try to explain the tradition, analyze its various parts, and ascertain how far these are in accordance with the internal evidences in the plays in which Falstaff and his companions are introduced, than build a theory upon it. It is on this account that I am induced to hazard a conjecture which will satisfy all the authenticated parts of the tradition, by supposing *another reason* for the play having been produced before the court at a very short notice.

If we inquire what could have led our great dramatist to select Windsor for the scene of the love adventures of Falstaff, believing the tradition that the play was written by command of the queen, does it appear an improbable conjecture to suppose that Elizabeth may have been at Windsor at the time, and that either he was induced to do so under an impression that his comedy might be more favourably received from its local associations, or that her majesty may have commanded the lord chamberlain's servants to exhibit a new play, the scene of which should be laid in the place where she was then holding her court? The title-page to the first edition of the sketch informs us that the play "hath been divers times acted by the Right Honourable my Lord Chamberlain's servants, both before Her Majesty

and elsewhere." The queen, it is well known, had plays and masques exhibited before her at Windsor Castle; and it appears to me that the following incident, which is introduced both in the sketch and the amended play, is almost sufficient of itself to show that my conjecture of its provincial composition is correct:—

"*Doc.* Where be my Host de gartyre ?

"*Host.* O here sir in perplexitie.

"*Doc.* I cannot tell vad be dad,

But begar I will tell you van ting,

Dear be a Garmaine Duke come to de Court,

Has cosened all de host of Branford,

And Redding : begar I tell you for good will,

Ha, ha, mine Host, am I euen met you.

[*Exit.*

" *Enter SIR HUGH.*

"*Sir Hu.* Where is mine Host of the gartyr ?

Now my Host, I would desire you looke you now,

To haue a care of your entertainments,

For there is three sorts of cosen garmombles,

Is cosen all the Host of Maidenhead & Readings,

Now you are an honest man, and a scurvy beggerly lowsie knaue
beside :

And can point wrong places,

I tell you for good will, grate why mine Host."

In the amended play, we have a more particular account of the same incident :—

"*Bard.* Sir, the Germans desire to have three of your horses : the duke himself will be to-morrow at court, and they are going to meet him.

"*Host.* What duke should that be comes so secretly ? I hear not of him in the court : Let me speak with the gentlemen ; they speak English ?

"*Bard.* Ay, sir ; I'll call them to you.

"*Host.* They shall have my horses ; but I'll make them pay, I'll

sauce them : they have had my house a week at command ; I have turned away my other guests : they must come off ; I'll sauce them : Come."

The merry host of the Garter was, however, altogether mistaken in the character of his noble guest ; and, instead of "sawcing" him, was "plainly cousened." The following extract from the amended play will complete the allusions to this event :—

"*Bard.* Out, alas, sir ! cozenage ! meer cozenage.

"*Host.* Where be my horses ? speak well of them, varletto.

"*Bard.* Run away with the cozeners : for so soon as I came beyond Eton, they threw me off, from behind one of them, in a slough of mire ; and set spurs and away, like three German devils, three Doctor Faustuses.

"*Host.* They are gone but to meet the duke, villain : do not say they be fled ! Germans are honest men.

" *Enter* SIR HUGH EVANS.

"*Eva.* Where is mine host ?

"*Host.* What is the matter, sir ?

"*Eva.* Have a care of your entertainments ; there is a friend of mine come to town, tells me there is three couzin germans, that has cozened all the hosts of Readings, of Maidenhead, of Colebrook, of horses and money. I tell you for good-will, look you : you are wise, and full of gibes and vlouting-stogs ; and 'tis not convenient you should be cozened : Fare you well. [*Exit.*

" *Enter* DR. CAIUS.

"*Caius.* Vere is mine *Host de Jarterre* ?

"*Host.* Here, master doctor, in perplexity, and doubtful dilemma.

"*Caius.* I cannot tell vat is dat : But it is tell-a me, dat you make grand preparation for a duke *de Jarmany* : by my trot, dere is no duke dat de court is know to come : I tell you for good vill : adieu. [*Exit.*

"*Host.* Hue and cry, villain, go ;—assist me, knight ; I am undone : fly, run, hue and cry, villain ! I am undone !"

Mr. Knight, with every appearance of probability, con-

siders this incident as one of those local and temporary allusions which Shakespeare seized upon to arrest the attention of his audience; and he proceeds to say, that if we knew that a real German duke had visited Windsor, a rare occurrence in the days of Elizabeth, we should have the date of the original sketch of the comedy pretty exactly fixed. In 1592, according to Mr. Knight, a German duke did visit Windsor; and then follows, in the "Pictorial Shakespeare," an account of a narrative, in the old German language, of a journey to England of the Duke of Würtemberg, in 1592, which narrative, drawn up by his secretary, contains a daily journal of his proceedings. He was accompanied by a considerable retinue, and travelled under the name of "the Count Mombeliard." The title of this work may be translated as follows:— "A short and true description of the bathing journey^f which his Serene Highness the Right Honourable Prince and Lord Frederick, Duke of Würtemberg, and Teck, Count of Mümpelgart, Lord of Heidenheim, Knight of the two ancient royal orders of St. Michael in France, and of the Garter^g in England, &c., &c., lately performed in the year

^f The author, in an address, explains that this title, though it may appear strange, as only one bathing-place is visited, was adopted, because, as in the "usual bathing-journeys, it is common to assemble together, as well all sorts of strange persons out of foreign places and nations, as known friends and sick people, even so in the description of this bathing journey will be found all sorts of curious things, and strange (marvellous) histories." — (Knight's Library Shakespeare, vol. iii., p. 10).

^g This shows that the duke's titles here given are those which he possessed at the time of the publication of the book, and not when he made his journey. It appears, from MS. Lansd. 79, Art. 20, that he applied for the Order of the Garter on the 9th of April, 1595.

1592, from Mümpelgart into the celebrated kingdom of England, afterwards returning through the Netherlands, until his arrival again at Mümpelgart. Noted down from day to day, in the briefest manner, by your Princely Grace's gracious command, by your fellow-traveller and Private Secretary. Printed at Tübingen, by Erhardo Cellio, 1602."

This curious volume contains a sort of passport from Lord Howard, addressed, as usual in such documents, to all justices of the peace, mayors, and bailifs, which Mr. Knight gives with the errors of the German transcriber. With a few obvious corrections, the original paper was probably nearly as follows :—

"Whereas this nobleman, Counte Mombeliard, is to passe over contrye in England, into the Lowe Contries, thise shalbe to wil and command you, in hir Majestyes name (for suche is hir pleasure), to see him founished with post horses in his travail to the sea syde, and there to seke up such shippinge as shalbe fit for his transportacions, *he payinge nothinge for the same.* For which this shalbe your sufficient warrante. So see that you faile not hereof, at your perills. From Bifleete, the 2 of Septembre, 1592 (34 Eliz.)

"Your friend,

"C. HOWARD."

The German nobleman visited Windsor; was shown "the splendidly beautiful and royal castle;" he "hunted a stag for a long time over a broad and pleasant plain, with a pack of remarkably good hounds;" heard the music of an organ, and of other instruments, with the voices of little boys, as well as a sermon an hour long, in a church covered with lead; and, after staying some days, departed from Hampton Court. It would have been more satisfactory if Mr. Knight had taken occasion

to describe the Count's course more minutely, for the above-mentioned work is so very rare, that I have not been able to obtain a sight of it. For instance, his conjecture would have received a strong confirmation, if we knew that Count Mombeliard had taken Reading in his onward journey. It may, perhaps, be a question, whether the "cosen garmombles" of Sir Hugh Evans apply only to the count's retinue, or include himself? If the former, the conjecture becomes altogether much more probable; and, with Mr. Knight, I have little doubt that the passages which relate to the German duke have reference to the Duke of Würtemberg's visit to Windsor in the year 1592 — a matter to be forgotten in 1601, when Malone says the sketch was written; and not likely to be so alluded to in 1596, four years afterwards, which Chalmers assigns as its date. His grace and suite must have caused a sensation at Windsor. Probably mine host of the garter had really made "grand preparation for a Duke de Jarmany;" at any rate, he would believe Bardolph's assertion that "the Germans desire to have three of your horses." Was there any dispute about the ultimate payment for the duke's horses, which *he* was authorised to have free of expence? Did our host know of this when he said "they shall have my horses, but I'll make them pay?" The count himself, perhaps, would not have sanctioned a "cousenage" of this kind, but his attendants would have little scruple in availing themselves of the general privilege given to their master by Lord Howard.

Mr. Knight has overlooked one fact, which appears at first sight to overthrow all his conjectures on this point,

and it certainly goes far to invalidate much of his reasoning. When Count Mombeliard visited England, *he had not succeeded to the title of duke.*^h This must be considered in relation to what I have previously said; but the coincidences are so very remarkable, that I think we may safely conclude the difference between the titles of count and duke is not of itself sufficient to render Mr. Knight's conjecture altogether valueless.

The close of the year 1592, when Shakespeare was in his twenty-ninth year, cannot, I should think, be considered too early a date for the composition of so meagre a sketch as that printed in the following pages, which contains nothing that may not with great reason be ascribed to a young author, or, as a whole, that Shakespeare could not with considerable ease have finished in fourteen days, if that part of the tradition be correct. It appears, also, from Nichols' "Progresses," that Queen Elizabeth had masques and tournaments at Windsor Castle in January, 1593. This circumstance, occurring so very soon after Count Mombeliard's visit, may probably have been likewise the period of the first production of the "Merry Wives of Windsor."

In the books of the Stationers' Company we have the following entries relating to this play : —

"18 Jan., 1601-2.

"John Bushy.] An excellent and pleasant conceited Commedie of Sir John Faulstof, and the Merry Wyves of Windesor.

"Arth. Johnson.] By assignment from John Busbye a book, An excellent and pleasant conceited comedie of Sir John Faulstafe and the mery wyves of Windsor."

^h Sattler, Geschichte des Herzogthums Württemberg, vol. v., p. 162.

These entries refer to the earliest edition of the sketch, now for the first time reprinted. Four copies only of this edition are known, being respectively in the libraries of the Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Daniel, the Bodleian, and Trinity College, Cambridge. A second edition of the sketch was published by Arthur Johnson, in 1619, sm. 4to., under the following title:—"A most pleasant and excellent conceited Comedy of Sir John Falstaffe, and the Merry Wiues of Windsor, with the swaggering Vaine of Ancient Pistoll, and Corporall Nym: Written by W. Shakespeare." The amended play was first published in the folio of 1623, but we have a late quarto edition of it, published by R. Meighen, in 1630, and entered on the books of the Stationers' Company on Jan. 29th the same year.

Meres does not mention the "Merry Wives of Windsor" in his list of Shakespeare's comedies, and the above extract from the books of the Stationers' Company is the earliest notice we have been able to discover. It appears to have been acted before King James I., in November 1604; but, as we are not told whether it is the amended play or the sketch,¹ this information is of little value. I believe it, however, to have been the amended play, and that it was then new in that form. There are several allusions in the amended play which serve to show that it was written after King James's accession

¹ Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court, edited by P. Cunningham, p. 203. I presume I am right in saying 1604; for although 1605 is the date at the top of the accounts, yet it appears to allude to a session commencing in November, 1604, and ending in October, 1605.

to the throne. I shall only allude to Chalmers' reasoning on what he considers to refer to Spenser's "Fairy Queen," and his constant Shakesperian evidence, Lodge's *Devils Incarnate*, published in 1596, in which he is followed by Mr. Knight, as far too vague and uncertain to found a reasonable conjecture upon, when we have other allusions much more evident. Mrs. Page's remark, "these knights will hack, and so thou shouldst not alter the article of thy gentry," can only allude to the immense number of knights made by King James I. In the beginning of the year 1603, he made two hundred and thirty-seven knights in the course of one month, and the order, in consequence, became so common as to bring it into general ridicule. In July, the same year, the court went to Windsor, and soon afterwards the feast of St. George was celebrated there with great solemnity. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of Lennox, our poet's great patron, the Earl of Southampton, the Earl of Pembroke, and the Earl of Marre, were installed Knights of the Garter. Malone thinks very reasonably that the poetical description of the insignia of the garter, in the fifth act of the amended play, may allude to this occurrence; and they certainly would have a peculiar grace if written after such a solemnity.

In the original sketch Falstaff says to Shallow, "You'll complain of me to the *council*." In the amended play we read, "You'll complain of me to the *king*." This is an additional argument, that the amended play was written after the accession of James I. The allusion to the Cotswold games is, I am afraid, too indefinite to found an argument upon. From the "Annalia

Dubrensia," it appears that Dover, who, the commentators say, *instituted* these games in the reign of James I., only "revived and continued" them. It is clear, from the mention, in the second part of Henry IV., of "Will Squele, a Cotswold man," that the Cotswold hills had some celebrity before Dover made it famous; and, in our own times, Shallow might there have found a match for his four swinge bucklers.

Chalmers found *two words*,¹ in Lodge's "Devils Incarnate," 1596, which occur in the amended play, but are *not* in the original sketch of the comedy. These words are *potatoes* and *eringoes*; the last not a very common one, perhaps, but still not sufficiently uncommon to warrant the conclusion that Shakespeare had Lodge's work in his mind when he makes Falstaff say, "Let the sky rain *potatoes*; let it thunder to the tune of Green Sleeves; hail kissing comfits; and snow *eringoes*: Let there come a tempest of provocation." Chalmers does not quote the passages from Lodge to which he refers; but it is only necessary to say that they do not confirm, by any means, his conjecture that Shakespeare borrowed them from his favourite author.

2 Leaving the question of the chronology, we have to consider, if possible, points of greater difficulty and uncertainty, and regard the "Merry Wives of Windsor" in connexion with the Historical Plays. Was it written after the first part of Henry IV., after the second part, after Henry V., or before these historical plays? I confess that the difficulty of discovering an hypothesis

¹ Mr. Knight (Library Shakespeare, vol. iii., p. 9) introduces *eight* words as common to Lodge and Shakespeare—a mistake.

which will satisfy *all* the conditions of the problem, and enable us to reconcile the apparently contradictory evidence on this subject, is almost insurmountable: but I will briefly place a summary of the case before the reader, and endeavour to draw a satisfactory conclusion.

First, let us consider Mistress Quickly, a character common to the two^k parts of Henry IV., Henry V., and the "Merry Wives of Windsor." In the first part of Henry IV. we find her married to the Host of the Boar's Head; in the second part, she is "a poor Widow of Eastcheap," according to her own account, and Falstaff swore "to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my lady thy wife;" and in Henry V., we find her the wife of Pistol, although Nym had been "troth-plaint" to her. But, in the Merry Wives, she denies being a wife, yet still she is termed Mistress Quickly, and has, apparently, had no previous knowledge of Falstaff; for, if Mrs. Quickly had been Dr. Caius's servant during her widowhood, Falstaff could not have failed to recognize instead of treating her as a stranger. In Henry V. she says to Pistol, "Pr'ythee, honey-sweet husband, let me bring thee to Staines," a town certainly not far from Windsor: but this cannot be considered as involving any necessary connexion between the plays. It is quite impossible, under any supposition of date, to reconcile the Quickly of the Merry Wives with the Quickly of the Historical Plays.

* Mr. Knight (Library Shakespeare, vol. iii., p. 19) says that Quickly is *invariably* called *the Hostess* in the first part of Henry IV., but she is addressed by her proper name by the Prince in act iii., sc. 3. He also mentions her as "a Hostess without a name."

If we suppose, as Mr. Knight supposes, that the Merry Wives is first of all in order, how is it possible that Mistress Quickly, who is not a wife, could meet Falstaff at Windsor, and not recognize the hero of the Boar's Head? Equal difficulties attend any other similar supposition—I mean as to whether she was introduced on the stage as Dr. Caius's nurse, or his dry nurse, or his cook, or his laundry, after the first or second parts of Henry IV., or after Henry V. The latter supposition, indeed, does not involve the difficulty of her widowhood, but it does involve others of equal weight, and so obvious that they do not require special notice.

The character of Pistol is common to the second part of Henry IV., Henry V., and the "Merry Wives of Windsor." There can, in this case, at least, whatever Mr. Knight may say to the contrary, be no question of the identity of character. The Pistol, who says:—

"Shall dunghill curs confront the Helicons?
And shall good news be baffled?
Then, Pistol, lay thy head in Furies' lap,"

is the same classical braggadocio who exclaims, in indignation, at the insult offered to him when commanded, by his captain, to bear a letter to the merry wives:—

"Shall I sir Pandarus of Troy become,
And by my side wear steel? then, Lucifer take all!"

But if *similarity* of language be not a sufficient proof, I have a stronger one to offer to the reader's notice. In the second part of Henry IV., act. v. sc. 3, he uses the expression "When Pistol lies, do this." *This exact*

*passage also occurs in the original sketch of the Merry Wives of Windsor.*¹ Mr. Knight says that Pistol, Bardolph, and Nym, are Falstaff's *servants* in the *Merry Wives*, and his *soldiers* in the *Historical Plays*. I apprehend they were both servants and soldiers in all four plays. In the *Merry Wives*, we find Falstaff swearing that they were "*good soldiers* and tall fellows." Pistol says, "Away, sir *Corporal Nym*." We have "the swaggering vein of *Ancient Pistol* and *Corporal Nym*" on the title of the first edition of the original sketch; and I scarcely think, under any circumstances, these characters can even be considered in the *Historical Plays* as soldiers in the strict sense of the word, more than Falstaff was a captain. At the Boar's Head they were his servants; and they were, perhaps, not less so when they accompanied their master to the wars. The independence of Pistol's character is sustained in the *Merry Wives*, with one single exception; and his conversation, both in the sketch and the amended play, is similar to that used by him in the other plays in which he is introduced.

But, although the character of Pistol is essentially the same in all three plays, yet the circumstances are most unaccountably altered; for, in this case, likewise, only one theory will reconcile his position in the *Merry Wives* with that in which he is placed in the *historical plays*. In the former, he is discharged by Falstaff: he goes forth to open his metaphorical oyster with his sword, to try his fortunes in the world: but the "swaggering rascal" is introduced in the second part of

¹ See the present volume, p. 13.

Henry IV. as Falstaff's ancient, and challenging him in a cup of sack. Mistress Quickly calls him "Captain Pistol;" and, when he quarrels with Doll Tearsheet, the "No more, Pistol; I would not have you go off here; discharge yourself of our company, Pistol," is certainly characteristic of the same master who says, "No quips now, Pistol." Falstaff makes him "vanish like hail stones" in the Merry Wives: he thrusts him down stairs in Henry IV., saying, "a rascal to brave me!" Falstaff also tells him he will "double-charge" him with dignities, when he brought the news of the king's death. Mistress Quickly was not even acquainted with her future husband, in the Merry Wives. How, then, can the character of Pistol, being introduced into that play, be reconcileable on any other supposition than that the composition of the Merry Wives altogether preceded that of the historical plays?—a supposition involving, as I have before said, difficulties of no ordinary kind.

Bardolph is mentioned by Falstaff, in the first part of Henry IV., as having been in his service thirty-two years;—"I have maintained that salamander of yours with fire, any time this two and thirty years." The "salamander" of the historical plays is the "tinder-box" of the Merry Wives. Bardolph does not converse with Falstaff, in Henry IV., in a manner that would imply it was *after* he had been installed as "drawer" to the host of the Garter. If Falstaff had been at Windsor in the early period of his career, he would not have said, "Bardolph, follow him; a tapster is a good trade: an old cloak makes a new jerkin; a

withered serving-man, a fresh tapster." Bardolph could scarcely have been a "withered serving-man," if the *Merry Wives* had preceded the historical plays. In the second part of *Henry IV.*, we find Mistress Quickly saying she had known Falstaff "these twenty-nine years, come peascod time:" yet, if it was the same Quickly who was first introduced to Falstaff at Windsor, she must have known him at least thirty-two years; for Bardolph was in his service at that time. This, perhaps, can scarcely be esteemed a fair argument: but in act iii., sc. 2., we find Bardolph not knowing Justice Shallow; although, if the *Merry Wives* had preceded *Henry IV.*, he must have recognized the "poor esquire of this county, and one of the king's justices of the peace." Would Robert Shallow, "esquire in the county of Gloster, justice of peace, and *coram*," have said, "Give me your hand, master Bardolph," to a "withered serving-man," who had fallen to the office of tapster? It seems that the "fuel that maintained that fire," being "all the riches" Bardolph "got in his service," refer partly to Bardolph's residence at Windsor; and if so, the introduction of Bardolph in the *Merry Wives* affords a strong evidence that the comedy must be read after the two parts of *Henry IV.*

Bardolph is introduced in all four plays, but Corporal Nym is found only in the *Merry Wives* and *Henry V.* Nym's conversation in both these plays is distinguished by the frequent repetition of the word *humour*. In some instances, the very same phrases occur. He says, "The king hath run bad humours on the knight;" alluding to Hal's treatment of him after

his succession to the throne. The same phrase is used by him in the *Merry Wives*, act i., sc. 1. I think the introduction of that character in the *Merry Wives* and *Henry V.* wholly unaccountable, if we believe Mr. Knight's conjecture that the *Merry Wives* preceded all the historical plays. It is not at all likely that, if this had been the case, no allusion whatever to Bardolph's "sworn brother in filching" should occur in the two parts of *Henry IV.* I am now taking it for granted, as a conjecture wholly unsupported by the slightest direct evidence, that the opinion of the fat knight of the *Merry Wives* and the historical plays having originally been two different and distinct creations of character, is wholly untenable.

And then, with respect to Justice Shallow, I do not see that the uncertainty of what he could be doing at Windsor involves an argument on any side of the question. In the second part of *Henry IV.*, it was fifty-five years since he had entered at Clement's Inn; and in the *Merry Wives* he says, "I am fourscore." Falstaff, in act iv., sc. 4, says, "I'll through Glostershire, and there will I visit master Robert Shallow, esquire; I have him already tempering between my finger and my thumb, and shortly will I seal with him." At this visit, perhaps, Falstaff borrowed the thousand pounds; but *when* could he, to use Shallow's words, "have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge?" This outrage must have been *after* the large loan and his hospitable reception in Gloucestershire. I do not see any thing unreasonable in the supposition that it happened after Falstaff's banishment

from the person of Henry V.; and this also affords an argument in favour of the later period of the production of the *Merry Wives*.^m

And, "last, not least," let us consider the fat knight himself, the only remaining "irregular humorist" introduced into the *Merry Wives* and the historical plays. Inferior he may be in the former to the wit of the Boar's Head; but is there sufficient *dissimilarity* of character to justify us in believing the Falstaff of the *Merry Wives* and the Oldcastle of Henry IV. to have been originally two different creations of character? I think not. The "latter spring," and the "Allhallown summer," are but revived in the aged sinner of Windsor Park, who is described as "Old, cold, withered, and of intolerable entrails," and "as poor as Job, and as wicked as his wife." The same "whale with so many tuns of oil" who considered "my hostess a most sweet wench," could with great propriety admire Mrs. Ford, who was "not young," and Mistress Page, the mother of "pretty virginity," and probably, therefore, as old as her companion. If the tradition be correct that Elizabeth commanded Shakespeare to exhibit Falstaff in love, we must consider our great dramatist compromising his original character of Oldcastle, or Falstaff, as little as possible, by not drawing him actually smitten with the tender passion, which would have completely destroyed all former notions concerning him, but bring-

^m Another difficulty may also be mentioned. The page that Prince Henry gave Falstaff is given by him to Mrs. Page, in the *Merry Wives*, and yet is introduced in the second part of Henry IV. and Henry V.

ing his addiction to the fair sex *more prominently* before the spectator, and thus obeying the royal command without infringing more than possible on his first ideas. Ben Jonson says, "His wit was in his own power, would the rule of it had been so too." This looks like a confirmation of the tradition. Thus, observes Dr. Johnson, "the poet approached as near as he could to the work enjoined him; yet, having perhaps in the former plays completed his own idea, seems not to have been able to give Falstaff all his former power of entertainment." In Henry IV., the prince describes him as "that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years," and "that villanous abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan." In the Merry Wives he is likewise always mentioned as an aged person. In the second part of Henry IV., he describes himself "as poor as Job." The same expression is used in the Merry Wives, in a passage I have previously quoted. The letter of Jack Falstaff to Prince Henry, in act ii., sc. 2, of the second part of Henry IV., is also remarkably similar in style with the knight's love-letter to Mistress Page, in act ii., sc. 1, of the Merry Wives; and both conclude in a very similar manner.

Too much stress has, I think, been laid by the critics on the lavish manner in which Falstaff is discovered in the "Merry Wives of Windsor" to be living at the Garter Inn. He sits at "ten pounds a week," and is "an emperor" in his expence. I see nothing very improbable in the conjecture, without reducing fiction too much to positive fact, but merely considering the circumstances

as they must have arisen and *remained* in the dramatist's mind, that this was after his banishment from the person of the prince, who says,—

“For competence of life I will allow you,
That lack of means enforce you not to evil.”

Prince John, also, says immediately afterwards :—

“I like this fair proceeding of the king's :
He hath intent, *his wonted followers*
Shall all be very well provided for ;
But all are banish'd, till their conversations
Appear more wise and modest to the world.”

Falstaff may then have been living at Windsor, with his former “followers,” on an allowance from the young king : but that “ten pounds a week” was too great a rate for his purse, we learn from the necessity he is under of “discarding some of his followers.” Falstaff was less of a soldier at Windsor than formerly, but Pistol and Nym keep up their martial dignity, and refuse to take “the humour letter.” In the same play, it is remarkable that he is described as being so poor ; and Ford “thinks himself in much better plight for a lender” than he is. He addresses his body, and says, “Wilt thou after the expence of so much money be now a gainer?” Could he allude to the money he borrowed from Justice Shallow ; and had he been so extravagant as to be obliged to share the booty of the fan-handle with Pistol ? In the Falstaff who says “Reason, you rogue, reason : Think'st thou I'll endanger my soul *gratis* ?” we recognize the Falstaff of the historical plays.

I think, with Skottowe, that “the want of symmetry

between the two characters is in the point of Falstaff's intrigue with the merry wives. The objection is not to his inclination to gallantry with Mistress Ford, or Mistress Page, but to the personal vanity and simple credulity which a belief of their attachment to him necessarily presupposes in Falstaff. Of personal vanity the fat knight of Henry IV. possesses not a spark: on the contrary, his preposterous fatness is an exhaustless theme of his own laughter. Rather than have courted exposure and ridicule from two sprightly women, he would instantly have smelt waggery in any advances they might have made to him; and if he had not at once put an end to their hopes of fooling him, he would merely have yielded till he could successfully have turned the tables on themselves. The Falstaff of the 'Merry Wives,' indeed, jests with himself, and is merry with his unwieldy person, but the effect is only that of making his conduct appear more absurd and unnatural."^a

The differences which exist between the Falstaff of the Merry Wives and the Falstaff of the historical plays may be accounted for much more reasonably, on the *tradition* that Shakespeare was, in some measure, writing to the ideas of another, than on the unsupported *conjecture* that they were originally two distinct characters. It is scarcely probable that our great dramatist would draw two characters so nearly similar. That the conjecture does explain several difficulties, I admit; but I should rather be inclined to believe that the two parts of Henry IV., like the Merry Wives, *originally*

^a Skottowe's "Life of Shakespeare," 8vo. Lond. 1824, vol. ii., p. 38.

existed in an unfinished state, and that, when the first sketch of the Merry Wives was written, those plays had NOT been altered and amended in the form in which they have come down to us. This conjecture will, I think, be sufficient to explain nearly every difficulty; and, knowing so little as we do of the history of Shakespeare's composition, I do not see any thing very improbable in it. If Johnson had not published the sketch of the Merry Wives—and there can be little doubt that it was a piratical publication—should we have had any reason to think that the amended play had ever existed in any other form than that in which it appeared in the first folio? At all events, this conjecture will obviously dispense with the necessity of believing in any “considerable abatement of the poet's skill.”

It is a fact, admitted, I believe, by all modern critics, that the Falstaff of the two parts of Henry IV. was originally called *Oldcastle*. Besides the internal evidences in the two plays, we have direct intimation of the fact in early writers: and as I have collected these as far as I could, in a little work on the subject,^o recently published, it cannot be necessary to enter into the question here. Mr. Collier thinks it is now placed beyond a shadow of a doubt. The settlement of this is of some importance in its connexion with the present question, and whether Oldcastle was originally the name of the fat knight in the Merry Wives. Had it been so, it is somewhat strange that not any internal evidence should be left

^o On the character of Sir John Falstaff, as originally exhibited by Shakespeare in the two parts of Henry IV., 12mo. Lond. 1841.

of the alteration of the name. In fact, the metre in one case, as I have shown, would not suit *Oldcastle*, and it could scarcely have been altered to Falstaff. We may, then, fairly conclude that the *Merry Wives* was written after the change had been made from *Oldcastle* to Falstaff, in all probability not very long after the production of the two parts of Henry IV.

The reader will thus see, that the supposition of the "*Merry Wives of Windsor*" having been written before Henry V., and the second part of Henry IV., involves fewer inconsistencies than any other. It is true that, in the sketch where Falstaff hears the noise of hunters at Hearne's Oak, he exclaims, "I'll lay my life the mad Prince of Wales is stealing his father's deer;" but, I think, with Mr. Knight, this may have reference to the Prince of the Famous Victories, a character with whom Shakespeare's audience was familiar. In the amended play, we find Page objecting to Fenton, because "he *kept* company with the wild Prince and Poins" (act iii., sc. 2.); but this refers to his *past* life, and, therefore, does not necessarily imply that Henry V. was yet a prince. We find that the character of Mistress Quickly only is inconsistent with the manner in which the other persons, common to the *Merry Wives* and the historical plays, are introduced. If the *Merry Wives* had preceded the two parts of Henry IV., Shakespeare would scarcely have alluded to Poins, and his intimacy with the Prince, neither of them being introduced into the former play.

It remains for me to notice the collection of early

tales printed in the Appendix^p to the present volume, and which, it is supposed, may have furnished our great dramatist with some of the incidents he has employed in the "Merry Wives of Windsor." How far this may have been the case, can, of course, be matter for conjecture only; but, if Shakespeare had any of them in his recollection when he wrote the Merry Wives — and it would appear, from a few similarities of language, that he had—it is certain that he has completely changed their detail and application. He has adopted the same incidents, but his design in using them was totally different from that of the novelist. The reader will be better able to judge from a perusal of them, than from any analysis I could offer.

Before I conclude these brief introductory observations, there is one point I wish to introduce to the reader's notice, though I will not pretend to say how far I may be borne out in my opinion. It is a singular fact, that no allusion to the legend of *Horne the hunter*, as he is called in the following sketch, has ever been discovered in any other writer. We are entirely ignorant of the date of the legend. In a manuscript, however, of the time of Henry VIII., in the British Museum,^q I find "Rycharde Horne, yeoman," among "the names of the *hunters* whiche be examyned and have confessed" for hunting in his majesty's forests. Is it improbable to

^p Oldys, in his manuscript notes to Langbaine, seems to mention the tale of "the caskets" in Boccaccio as the probable foundation of part of the plot of the "Merry Wives of Windsor;" but, as I could not discover any similarity, I have not inserted it in the Appendix.

^q MS. Bib. Reg. 17 C. xvi.

suppose that this was the person to whom the tale related by Mistress Page alludes? She speaks of him as no very ancient personage:—"Oft have you heard since Horne the hunter died." Connected as the "Merry Wives of Windsor" certainly is with the historical plays, the manners and language throughout are those of the time of Queen Elizabeth; and it is only convicting our great dramatist of an additional anachronism to those already well known of a similar character, in attributing to him the introduction of a tale of the time of Henry VIII. into a play supposed to belong to the commencement of the fifteenth century.

J. O. HALLIWELL.

35, Alfred Place, July, 1842.

A

Most pleasaunt and excellent conceited Comedie, of Syr *Iohn Falstaffe*, and the merrie Wiues of *Windsor*.

Entermixed with sundrie variable and pleasing humors, of Syr *Hugh* the Welch Knight, Iustice *Shallow*, and his wise Cousin M. *Slender*.

With the swaggering vaine of Auncient *Pistoll*, and Corporall *Nym*.

By *William Shakespeare*.

As it hath bene diuers times Acted by the right Honorable my Lord Chamberlaines seruants. Both before her Maiestie, and else-where.

L O N D O N

Printed by T. C. for Arthur Iohnson, and are to be sold at his shop in Powles Church-yard, at the signe of the Flower de Leuse and the Crowne.

1602.

A PLEASANT CONCEITED CO-
medie, of Syr IOHN FALSTAFFE, and the
merry Wiues of WINDSOR.

Enter IUSTICE SHALLOW, SYR HUGH, MAISTER PAGE,
and SLENDER.

Shal. Nere talke to me, Ile make a star-chamber
matter of it.

The Councell shall know it.

Pag. Nay good maister Shallow be perswaded by mee.

Slen. Nay surely my vncle shall not put it vp so.

Sir Hu. Wil you not heare reasons, M. Slenders ?

You should heare reasons.

Shal. Tho he be a knight, he shall not thinke to carrie
it so away.

M. Page, I will not be wronged. For you

Syr, I loue you, and for my cousen

He comes to looke vpon your daughter.

Pa. And heres my hand, and if my daughter
Like him so well as I, wee'l quickly haue it a match :
In the meane time let me intreat you to sojourne
Here a while. And on my life Ile vndertake
To make you friends.

Sir Hu. I pray you M. Shallowes, let it be so.
The matter is pud to arbitarments.

The first man is M. Page, videlicet M. Page.

The second is my selfe, videlicet my selfe.

And the third and last man, is mine host of the gartyr.

Enter SYR IOHN FALSTAFFE, PISTOLL, BARDOLFE,
and NIM.

Here is Sir Iohn himselfe now, looke you.

Fal. Now M. Shallow, youle complaine of me to the
Councell, I heare?

Shal. Sir Iohn, Sir Iohn, you haue hurt my keeper,
kild my dogs, stolne my deere.

Fal. But not kissed your keepers daughter.

Shal. Well this shall be answered.

Fal. Ile answere it straight. I haue done all this.

This is now answred.

Shal. Well, the Councell shall know it.

Fal. Twere better for you twere knowne in counsell,
Youle be laught at.

Sir Hu. Good vrdes Sir Iohn, good vrdes.

Fal. Good vrdes, good Cabidge.

Slender, I brake your head,

What matter haue you against mee?

Slen. I haue matter in my head against you and your
cogging companions, Pistoll and Nym. They carried
mee to the Tauerne and made mee drunke, and after-
ward picked my pocket.

Fal. What say you to this Pistoll, did you picke
Maister Slenders purse Pistoll?

Slen. I by this handkercher did he. Two faire shouell
boord shillings, besides seuen groats in mill sixpences.

Fal. What say you to this Pistoll?

Pist. Sir Iohn, and Maister mine, I combat craue
Of this same laten bilbo. I do retort the lie
Euen in thy gorge, thy gorge, thy gorge.

Slen. By this light it was he then.

Nym. Syr my honor is not for many words,
But if you run bace humors of me,
I will say mary trap. And there's the humor of it.

Fal. You heare these matters denide gentlemē,
You heare it.

*Enter MISTRESSE FOORD, MISTRESSE PAGE, and her
daughter ANNE.*

Pa. No more now,
I thinke it be almost dinner time,
For my wife is come to meet vs.

Fal. Mistresse Foord, I thinke your name is,
If I mistake not. [SYR IOHN *kisses her.*

Mis. Ford. Your mistake sir is nothing but in the
Mistresse. But my husbands name is Foord, sir.

Fal. I shall desire your more acquaintance.
The like of you good misteris Page.

Mis. Pa. With all my hart sir Iohn.
Come husband will you goe?
Dinner staies for vs.

Pa. With all my hart, come along Gentlemen.

[*Exit all, but SLENDER and MISTRESSE ANNE.*

Anne. Now forsooth why do you stay me?
What would you with me?

Slen. Nay for my owne part, I would litle or nothing
with you. I loue you well, and my vncle can tell you
how my liuing stands. And if you can loue me why so.
If not, why then happie man be his dole.

An. You say well M. Slender.
But first you must giue me leaue to
Be acquainted with your humor,
And afterward to loue you if I can.

Slen. Why by God, there's neuer a man in christen-
dome can desire more. What haue you Beares in your
Towne mistresse Anne, your dogs barke so?

An. I cannot tell M. Slender, I thinke there be.

Slen. Ha how say you? I warrant your afeard of a Beare let loose, are you not?

An. Yes trust me.

Slen. Now that's meate and drinke to me,
Ile run yon to a Beare, and take her by the mussell,
You neuer saw the like.

But indeed I cannot blame you,
For they are maruellous rough things.

An. Will you goe in to dinner M. Slendor?
The meate staies for you.

Slen. No faith not I. I thanke you,
I cannot abide the smell of hot meate
Nere since I broke my shin. Ile tel you how it
came

By my troth. A Fencer and I plaid three venies
For a dish of stewd prunes, and I with my ward
Defending my head, he hot my shin. Yes faith.

Enter MAISTER PAGE.

Pa. Come, come Maister Slender, dinner staies for
you.

Slen. I can eate no meate, I thanke you.

Pa. You shall not choose I say.

Slen. Ile follow you sir, pray leade the way.
Nay be God misteris Anne, you shall goe first,
I haue more manners then so, I hope.

An. Well sir, I will not be troublesome.

[Exit omnes.]

Enter SIR HUGH and SIMPLE, from dinner.

Sir Hu. Hark you Simple, pray you beare this letter
to Doctor Cayus house, the French Doctor. He is twell
vp along the street, and enquire of his house for one
mistris Quickly, his woman, or his try nurse, and deliuer

this Letter to her, it tis about Maister Slender. Looke you, will you do it now?

Sim. I warrant you Sir.

Sir Hu. Pray you do, I must not be absent at the grace.

I will goe make an end of my dinner,
There is pepions and cheese behinde.

[*Exit omnes.*]

Enter SIR IOHN FALSTAFFES *Host of the Garter*, NYM, BARDOLFE, PISTOLL, and the boy.

Fal. Mine Host of the Garter.

Host. What ses my bully Rooke?

Speake schollerly and wisely.

Fal. Mine Host, I must turne away some of my followers.

Host. Discard bully, Hercules cassire.

Let them wag, trot, trot.

Fal. I sit at ten pound a weeke.

Host. Thou art an Emperour Cæsar, Phæsser and Kesar bully.

Ile entertaine Bardolfe. He shall tap, he shall draw.
Said I well, bully Hector?

Fal. Do good mine Host.

Host. I haue spoke. Let him follow. Bardolfe

Let me see thee froth, and lyme. I am at

A word. Follow, follow.

[*Exit Host.*]

Fal. Do Bardolfe, a Tapster is a good trade,

An old cloake will make a new Ierkin,

A withered seruingman, a fresh Tapster :

Follow him Bardolfe.

Bar. I will sir, Ile warrant you Ile make a good shift to liue.

[*Exit BARDOLFE.*]

Pis. O bace gongarian wight, wilt thou the spicket willd?

Nym. His minde is not heroick: And theres the humor of it.

Fal. Well my Laddes, I am almost out at the heeles.

Pis. Why then let cybes insue.

Nym. I thanke thee for that humor.

Fal. Well I am glad I am so rid of this tinder Boy.
His stealth was too open, his filching was like
An vnskilfull singer, he kept not time.

Nym. The good humor is to steale at a minutes rest.

Pis. Tis so indeed Nym, thou hast hit it right.

Fal. Well, afore God, I must cheat, I must conycatch.
Which of you knowes Foord of this Towne?

Pis. I ken the wight, he is of substance good.

Fal. Well my honest lads, Ile tell you what I am about.

Pis. Two yards and more.

Fal. No gibes now Pistoll : indeed I am two yards
In the wast, but now I am about no wast :
Briefly, I am about thrift you rogues you,
I do intepd to make loue to Foords wife,
I espie entertainment in her. She carues, she
Discourses. She giues the lyre of inuitation,
And euery part to be constured rightly is, I am
Syr Iohn Falstaffes.

Pis. He hath studied her well, out of honestie
Into English.

Fal. Now the report goes, she hath all the rule
Of her husbands purse. She hath legians of angels.

Pis. As many diuels attend her.
And to her boy say I.

Fal. Heere's a Letter to her. Heeres another to
misteris Page.

Who euen now gaue me good eies too, examined my
exteriors with such a greedy intentiō, with the beames of
her beautie, that it seemed as she would a scorged me vp

like a burning glasse. Here is another Letter to her, shee beares the purse too. They shall be Excheckers to me, and Ile be cheaters to them both. They shall be my East and West Indies, and Ile trade to them both. Heere beare thou this Letter to Mistresse Foord. And thou this to mistresse Page. Weele thriue Lads, we will thriue.

Pist. Shall I sir Panderowes of Troy become?
And by my sword were steele.
Then Lucifer take all.

Nym. Here take your humor Letter againe,
For my part, I will keepe the hauior
Of reputation. And theres the humor of it.

Fal. Here sirrha beare me these Letters titely,
Saile like my pinnice to the golden shores:
Hence slaues, avant. Vanish like hailstones, goe.
Falstaffe will learne the humor of this age,
French thrift you rogue, my selfe and scirted Page.

[*Exit FALSTAFFE, and the Boy.*]

Pis. And art thou gone? Teaster Ile haue in pouch
When thou shalt want, bace Phrygian Turke.

Nym. I haue operations in my head, which are humors
of reuenge.

Pis. Wilt thou reuenge?

Nym. By Welkin and her Fairies.

Pis. By wit, or sword?

Nym. With both the humors I will disclose this loue
to Page. Ile poses him with Iallowes,
And theres the humor of it.

Pis. And I to Foord will likewise tell
How Falstaffe varlot vilde,
Would haue her loue, his doue would proue,
And eke his bed defile.

Nym. Let vs about it then.

Pis. Ile second thee: sir Corporall Nym troope on.

[*Exit omnes.*]

Enter MISTRESSE QUICKLY, and SIMPLE.

Quic. M. Slender is your Masters name say you?

Sim. I indeed that is his name.

Quic. How say you? I take it hee is somewhat a weakly man :

And he has as it were a whay coloured beard.

Sim. Indeed my maisters beard is kane colored.

Quic. Kane colour, you say well.

And is this letter from Sir Yon, about Misteris An, Is it not?

Sim. I indeed is it.

Quic. So: and your Maister would haue me as it twere to speak to misteris Anne concerning him: I promise you my M. hath a great affectioned mind to mistresse Anne himselfe. And if he should know that I should as they say, giue my verdict for any one but himselfe, I should heare of it throughly: For I tell you friend, he puts all his priuities in me.

Sim. I by my faith you are a good staie to him.

Quic. Am I? I and you knew all yowd say so: Washing, brewing, baking, all goes through my hands, Or else it would be but a woe house.

Sim. I beshrow me, one woman to do all this, Is very painfull.

Quic. Are you auised of that? I, I warrant you, Take all, and paie all, all goe through my hands, And he is such a honest man, and he should chance To come home and finde a man here, we should Haue no who with him. He is a parlowes man.

Sim. Is he indeed?

Quic. Is he quoth you? God keepe him abroad: Lord blesse me, who knocks there?

For Gods sake step into the Counting-house,
While I goe see whose at doore.

[He steps into the Counting-house.]

What Iohn Rugby, Iohn,
Are you come home sir alreadie?

[And she opens the doore.]

Doct. I begar I be forget my oyntment,
Where be Iohn Rugby?

Enter Iohn.

Rug. Here sir, do you call?

Doc. I you be Iohn Rugbye, and you be Iack Rugby
Goe run vp met your heeles, and bring away
De oyntment in de vindoe present:
Make hast Iohn Rugbye. O I am almost forget
My simples in a boxe in de Counting-house:
O Ieshu vat be here, a deuella, a deuella?
My Rapier Iohn Rugby, Vat be you, vat make
You in my Counting-house?
I tinck you be a teefe.

Quic. Ieshu blesse me, we are all vndone.

Sim. O Lord sir no: I am no theefe,
I am a Seruingman:
My name is Iohn Simple, I brought a Letter sir
From my M. Slender, about misteris Anne Page
Sir: Indeed that is my comming.

Doc. I begar is dat all? Iohn Rugby giue a ma pen
An Inck: tarche vn pettit tarche a little.

[The Doctor writes.]

Sim. O God what a furious man is this?

Quic. Nay it is well he is no worse:
I am glad he is so quiet.

Doc. Here giue dat same to sir Hu, it ber ve chalège
Begar tell him I will cut his nase, will you?

Sim. I sir, Ile tell him so.

Doc. Dat be vell, my Rapier Iohn Rugby, follow may.

[*Exit Doctor.*]

Quic. Well my friend, I cannot tarry, tell your
Maister Ile doo what I can for him,
And so farewell.

Sim. Mary will I, I am glad I am got hence.

[*Exit omnes.*]

Enter MISTRESSE PAGE, reading of a Letter.

Mis. Pa. Mistresse Page I loue you. Aske me no
reason,

Because theyr impossible to alledge. Your faire,
And I am fat. Yon loue sack, so do I:
As I am sure I haue no mind but to loue,
So I know you haue no hart but to grant.
A souldier doth not vse many words, where a knowes
A letter may serue for a sentence. I loue you,
And so I leaue you.

Yours SYR JOHN FALSTAFFE.

Now Ieshu blesse me, am I methomorphised?
I thinke I knowe not myselfe. Why what a Gods name
doth this man see in me, that thus he shootes at my
honestie? Well but that I knowe my owne heart, I
should scarcely perswade my selfe I were hand. Why
what an vnreasonable woolsack is this? He was neuer
twice in my companie, and if then I thought I gaue
such assurance with my eies, Ide pul them out, they
should neuer see more holie daies. Well, I shall trust
fat men the worse while I liue for his sake. O God
that I knew how to be reuenged of him. But in good
time, heeres mistresse Foord.

Enter MISTRESSE FOORD.

Mis. For. How now Mistris Page, are you reading
Loue Letters? How do you woman?

Mis. Pa. O woman I am I know not what :
In loue vp to the hard eares. I was neuer in such a case
in my life.

Mis. Ford. In loue, now in the name of God with
whom ?

Mis. Pa. With one that sweares he loues me,
And I must not choose but do the like againe :
I prethie looke on that Letter.

Mis. For. Ile match your letter iust with the like,
Line for line, word for word. Only the name
Of misteris Page, and misteris Foord disagrees :
Do me the kindness to looke vpon this.

Mis. Pa. Why this is right my letter.
O most notorious villaine !
Why what a bladder of iniquitie is this ?
Lets be reuenged what so ere we do.

Mis. For. Reuenged, if we liue weel be reuenged.
O Lord if my husband should see this Letter,
Ifaith this would euen giue edge to his Iealousie.

Enter FORD, PAGE, PISTOLL and NYM.

Mis. Pa. See where our husbands are,
Mine's as far from Iealousie,
As I am from wronging him.

Pis. Ford the words I speake are forst :
Beware, take heed, for Falstaffe loues thy wife :
When Pistoll lies do this.

Ford. Why sir my wife is not young.

Pis. He wooes both yong and old, both rich and poore
None comes amis. I say he loues thy wife :
Faire warning did I giue, take heed,
For sommer comes, and Cuckoo birds appeare :
Page, belieue him what he ses. Away sir Corporall Nym.

[*Exit PISTOLL.*

Nym. Syr the humor of it is, he loues your wife,
I should ha borne the humor Letter to her :
I speake and I auouch tis true : My name is Nym.
Farwell, I loue not the humor of bread and cheese :
And theres the humor of it.

[*Exit Nym.*

Pa. The humor of it, quoth you :
Heres a fellow frites humor out of his wits.

Mis. Pa. How now sweet hart, how dost thou ?

Enter MISTRESSE QUICKLY.

Pa. How now man ? How do you mistris Ford ?

Mis. For. Well I thanke you good M. Page.
How now husband, how chaunce thou art so melancholy.

Ford. Melancholy, I am not melancholy.
Goe get you in, goe.

Mis. For. God saue me, see who yonder is :
Weele set her a worke in this businesse.

Mis. Pa. O sheele serue excellent.
Now you come to see my daughter An I am sure.

Quic. I forsooth that is my comming.

Mis. Pa. Come go in with me. Come *Mis. Ford.*

Mis. For. I follow you Mistresse Page.

[*Exit MISTRESSE FORD, MIS. PAGE, and QUICKLY.*

For. M. Page did you heare what these fellows said ?

Pa. Yes M. Ford, what of that sir ?

For. Do you thinke it is true that they told vs ?

Pa. No by my troth do I not,
I rather take them to be paltry lying knaues,
Such as rather speakes of enuie,
Then of any certaine they haue
Of any thing. And for the knight, perhaps
He hath spoke merrily, as the fashion of fat men
Are : But should he loue my wife,
Ifaith Ide turne her loose to him :

And what he got more of her,
Then ill lookes, and shrowd words,
Why let me beare the penaltie of it.

For. Nay I do not mistrust my wife,
Yet Ide be loth to turne them together,
A man may be too confident.

Enter Host and SHALLOW.

Pa. Here comes my ramping host of the garter,
Ther's either licker in his hed, or mony in his purse,
That he lookes so merily. Now mine Host?

Host. God blesse you my bully rookes, God blesse you.
Cauelera Iustice I say.

Shal. At hand mine host, at hand. M. Ford god den
to you.

God den an twentie good M. Page.

I tell you sir we haue sport in hand.

Host. Tell him cauelira Iustice: tell him bully rooke.

Ford. Mine Host a the garter:

Host. What ses my bully rooke?

Ford. A word with you sir.

[*FORD and the Host talkes.*

Shal. Harke you sir, Ile tell you what the sport shall be,
Doctor Cayus and sir Hu are to fight,
My merrie Host hath had the measuring
Of their weapons, and hath
Appointed them contrary places. Harke in your eare:

Host. Hast thou no shute against my knight,
My guest, my cauellira.

For. None I protest: But tell him my name
Is Rooke, onlie for a Iest.

Host. My hand bully: Thou shalt
Haue egres and regres, and thy
Name shall be Brooke: Sed I well bully Hector?

Shal. I tell you what M. Page, I beleeeue

The Doctor is no Iester, heele laie it on :
 For tho we be Iustices and Doctors,
 And Church men, yet we are
 The sonnes of women M. Page :

Pa. True maister Shallow :

Shal. It will be found so maister Page :

Pa. Maister Shallow you your selfe
 Haue bene a great fighter,
 Tho now a man of peace :

Shal. M. Page I haue seene the day that yong
 Tall fellowes with their stroke & their passado,
 I haue made them trudge Maister Page,
 A tis the hart, the hart doth all : I
 Haue seene the day, with my two hand sword
 I would a made you foure tall Fencers
 Scipped like Rattes.

Host. Here boyes, shall we wag, shall we wag ?

Shal. Ha with you mine host.

[*Exit* HOST and SHALLOW.]

Pa. Come M. Ford, shall we to dinner ?
 I know these fellowes sticks in your minde.

For. No in good sadnesse not in mine :
 Yet for all this Ile try it further,
 I will not leaue it so :

Come M. Page, shall we to dinner ?

Pa. With all my hart sir, Ile follow you.

[*Exit omnes.*]

Enter SYR IOHN, and PISTOLL.

Fal. Ile not lend thee a peny.

Pis. I will retort the sum in equipage.

Fal. Not a pennie : I haue beene content you shuld
 lay my countenance to pawne : I haue grated vpon my
 good friends for 3. repriues, for you and your Coach-
 fellow Nym, else you might a looked thorow a grate like

a geminy of babones. I am damned in hell for swearing to Gentlemen your good souldiers and tall fellows : And when mistresse Briget lost the handle of her Fan, I tooked on my ho- thou hadst it not.

Pis. Didst thou not share? hadst thou not fiftene pence?

Fal. Reason you rogue, reason.

Doest thou thinke Ile indanger my soule gratis? In briefe, hang no more about mee, I am no gybit for you. I short knife and a throng to your manner of pickt hatch, goe. Youle not beare a Letter for me you rogue you: you stand vpon your honor. Why thou vnconfinable basenesse thou, tis as much as I can do to keep the termes of my honor precise. I, I my selfe sometimes, leauing the feare of God on the left hand, am faine to shuffel, to filch & to lurch. And yet you stand vpon your honor, you rogue. You, you.

Pis. I do recant: what woulst thou more of man?

Fal. Well, go too, away, no more.

Enter MISTRESSE QUICKLY.

Quic. Good you god den sir.

Fal. Good den faire wife.

Quic. Not so ant like your worship.

Fal. Faire mayd then.

Quic. That I am Ile be sworne, as my mother was The first houre I was borne.

Sir I would speake with you in priuate.

Fal. Say on I prethy, heeres none but my owne household.

Quic. Are they so? Now God blesse them, and make them his seruants.

Syr I come from Mistresse Foord.

Fal. So from Mistresse Foord. Goe on.

Quic. I sir, she hath sent me to you to let you

Vnderstand she hath receiued your Letter,
And let me tell you, she is one stands vpon her credit.

Fal. Well, come Misteris Ford, Misteris Ford.

Quic. I sir, and as they say, she is not the first
Hath bene led in a fooles paradise.

Fal. Nay prethy be briefe my good she Mercury.

Quic. Mary sir, sheed haue you meet her between
eight and nine.

Fal. So betweene eight and nine :

Quic. I forsooth for then her husband goes a birding,

Fal. Well commend me to thy mistris, tel her
I will not faile her : Boy giue her my purse.

Quic. Nay sir I haue another arant to do to you
From Misteris Page :

Fal. From misteris Page ? I prethy what of her ?

Quic. By my troth I think you work by inchant-
ments,

Els they could neuer loue you as they doo :

Fal. Not I, I assure thee : setting the attraction of my
Good parts aside, I vse no other inchantments :

Quic. Well sir, she loues you extreemly :
And let me tell you, shees one that feares God,
And her husband giues her leaue to do all :
For he is, not halfe so iealousie as M. Ford is.

Fal. But harke thee, hath misteris Page & mistris
Ford,
Acquainted each other how dearly they loue me ?

Quic. O God no sir : there were a iest indeed.

Fal. Well farwel, commend me to misteris Ford,
I will not faile her say.

Quic. God be with your worship.

[*Exit MISTRESSE QUICKLY.*]

Enter BARDOLFE.

Bar. Sir heer's a gentleman,

One M. Brooke, would speak with you,
He hath sent you a cup of sacke.

Fal. M. Brooke, hees welcome : Bid him come vp,
Such Brookes are alwaies welcome to me :
A Iack, will thy old bodie yet hold out ?
Wilt thou after the expence of so much mony
Be now a gainer ? . Good bodie I thanke thee,
And Ile make more of thee then I ha done :
Ha, ha, misteris Ford, and misteris Page, haue
I caught you a the hip ? go too.

Enter FOORD disguised like BROOKE.

For. God saue you sir.

Fal. And you too, would you speak with me ?

Fal. Mary would I sir, I am somewhat bolde to
trouble you,

My name is Brooke.

Fal. Good M. Brooke your verie welcome.

For. Ifaith sir I am a gentleman and a traueller,
That haue seen somewhat. And I haue often heard
That if mony goes before, all waies lie open.

Fal. Mony is a good souldier sir, and will on.

For. Ifaith sir, and I haue a bag here,
Would you wood helpe me to beare it.

Fal. O Lord, would I could tell how to deserue
To be your porter.

For. That may you easily sir Iohn : I haue an earnest
Sute to you. But good sir Iohn when I haue
Told you my grieffe, cast one eie of your owne
Estate, since your selfe knew what tis to be
Such an offender.

Fal. Verie well sir, proceed.

For. Sir I am deeply in loue with one Fords wife
Of this Towne. Now sir Iohn you are a gentleman
Of good discoursing, well beloued among Ladies,
A man of such parts that might win 20. such as she.

Fal. O good sir.

For. Nay beleue it sir Iohn, for tis time. Now my
loue

Is so grounded vpon her, that without her loue
I shall hardly liue.

Fal. Haue you importuned her by any means ?

Ford. No neuer sir.

Fal. Of what qualitie is your loue then ?

Ford. Ifaith sir, like a faire house set vpon
Another mans foundation.

Fal. And to what end haue you vnfolded this to me ?

For. O, sir, when I haue told you that, I told you all :
For she sir stands so pure in the firme state
Of her honestie, that she is too bright to be looked
Against : Now could I come against her
With some detectiō, I should sooner perswade her
From her marriage vow, and a hundred such nice
Tearmes that sheele stand vpon.

Fal. Why would it apply well to the veruensie of your
affection,
That another should possesse what you would enioy ?
Meethinks you prescribe verie proposterously
To your selfe.

For. No sir, for by that meanes should I be certaine
of that which I now misdoubt.

Fal. Well M. Brooke, Ile first make bold with your
mony,

Next, giue me your hand. Lastly, you shall
And you will, enioy Fords wife.

For. O good sir.

Fal. M. Brooke, I say you shall.

Ford. Want no mony Syr Iohn, you shall want none.

Fal. Want no Misteris Ford M. Brooke,
You shall want none. Euen as you came to me,
Her spokes mate, her go between parted from me :

I may tell you M. Brooke, I am to meet her
Between 8. and 9. for at that time the Iealous
Cuckally knaue her husband wil be from home,
Come to me soone at night, you shall know how
I speed M. Brooke.

Ford. Sir do you know Ford?

Fal. Hang him poore cuckally knaue, I know him not,
And yet I wrong him to call him poore. For they
Say the cuckally knaue hath legions of angels,
For the which his wife seemes to me well fauored,
And Ile vse her as the key of the cuckally knaues
Coffer, and there's my randeuowes.

Ford. Meethinkes sir it were very good that you
knew

Ford, that you might shun him.

Fal. Hang him cuckally knaue, Ile stare him
Out of his wits, Ile keepe him in awe
With this my cudgell: It shall hang like a meator
Ore the wittolly knaues head, M. Brooke thou shalt
See I will predominate ore the peasant,
And thou shalt lie with his wife. M. Brooke
Thou shalt know him for knaue and cuckold,
Come to me soone at night. *[Exit FALSTAFFE.]*

Ford. What a damned epicurian is this?
My wife hath sent for him, the plot is laid:
Page is an Asse, a foole. A secure Asse,
Ile sooner trust an Irishman with my
Aquauita bottle, Sir Hu our parson with my cheese,
A theefe to walk my ambling gelding, thē my wife
With her selfe: then she plots, then she ruminates,
And what she thinkes in her hart she may effect,
Shееle breake her hart but she will effect it.
God be praised, God be praised for my iealousie:
Well Ile goe preuent him, the time drawes on,
Better an houre too soone, then a minit too late,
Gods my life cuckold, cuckold. *[Exit FORD.]*

Enter the Doctor and his man.

Doc. Iohn Rugbie goe looke met your eies ore de stall,

And spie and you can see de parson.

Rug. Sir I cannot tell whether he be there or no,
But I see a great many comming.

Doc. Bully moy, mon rapier Iohn Rugabie, begar de Hearing be not so dead as I shall make him.

Enter SHALLOW, PAGE, my Host, and SLENDER.

Pa. God saue you M. Doctor Cayus.

Shal. How do you M. Doctor?

Host. God blesse thee my bully doctor, God blesse thee.

Doc. Vat be all you, van to tree com for, a?

Host. Bully to see thee fight, to see thee foine, to see thee trauerse, to see thee here, to see thee there, to see thee passe the punto. The stock, the reuerse, the distance: the montnce is a dead my francoyes? Is a dead my Ethiopian? Ha what ses my gallon? my escuolapis? Is a dead bullies taile, is a dead?

Doc. Begar de preest be a coward Iack knaue,
He dare not shew his face.

Host. Thou art a castallian king vrinall.
Hector of Greece my boy.

Shal. He hath showne himselfe the wiser man M.
Doctor :

Sir Hugh is a Parson, and you a Phisition. You must
Goe with me M. Doctor.

Host. Pardon bully Iustice. A word monsire mock-
water.

Doc. Mockwater, vat me dat?

Host. That is in our English tongue, Vallor bully,
vallor.

Doc. Begar den I haue as mockuater as de English
Iack dog, knaue.

Host. He will claperclaw thee titely bully.

Doc. Claperclawe, vat be dat?

Host. That is, he will make thee amends.

Doc. Begar I do looke he shal claperclaw me dē,
And Ile prouoke him to do it, or let him wag :
And moreouer bully, but M. Page and M. Shallow,
And eke cauellira Slender, go you all ouer the fields
to Frogmore?

Pa. Sir Hugh is there, is hee?

Host. He is there : goe see what humor hee is in,
Ile bring the doctor about by the fields :
Will it do well?

Shal. We wil do it my host. Farwel M. Doctor.

[*Exit all but the Host and Doctor.*]

Doc. Begar I will kill de cowardly Iack preest,
He is make a foole of moy.

Host. Let him die, but first sheth your impatience,
Throw cold water on your collar, com go with me
Through the fields to Frogmore, and Ile bring thee
Where mistris An Page is a feasting at a farm house,
And thou shalt wear hir cried game : sed I wel bully.

Doc. Begar excellent vel : and if you speak pour moy,
I shall procure you de gesse of all de gentlemē mon
patinces. I begar I sall.

Host. For the which Ile be thy aduersary
To misteris An Page : Sed I well?

Doc. I begar excellent.

Host. Let vs wag then.

Doc. Alon, alon, alon.

[*Exit omnes.*]

Enter SYR HUGH and SIMPLE.

Sir Hu. I pray you do so much as see if you can espie
Doctor Cayus comming, and giue me intelligence,
Or bring me vrde if you please now.

Sim. I will sir.

Sir Hu. Ieshu ples mee, how my hart trobes, and trobes,

And then she made him bedes of Roses,

And a thousand fragrant poses,

To shallow riueres. Now so kad vdge me, my hart

Swelles more and more. Mee thinkes I can cry

Verie well. There dwelt a man in Babylon,

To shallow riuers and to falles,

Melodious birds sing Madrigalles.

Sim. Sir here is M. Page and M. Shallow,

Comming hither as fast as they can.

Sir Hu. Then it is verie necessary I put vp my sword,
Pray giue me my cowne too, marke you.

Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.

Pa. God saue you Sir Hugh.

Shal. God saue you M. parson.

Sir Hu. God plesse you all from his mercies sake
now.

Pa. What the word and the sword, doth that agree
well?

Sir Hu. There is reasons and causes in all things,
I warrant you now.

Pa. Well Sir Hugh, we are come to craue
Your helpe and furtherance in a matter.

Sir Hu. What is I pray you?

Pa. Ifaith tis this sir Hugh. There is an auncient
friend of ours, a man of verie good sort, so at oddes with
one patience, that I am sure you would hartily griene to
see him. Now Sir Hugh, you are a scholler well red,
and verie perswasieue, we would intreate you to see if
you could intreat him to patience.

Sir Hu. I pray you who is it? Let vs know that.

Pa. I am shure you know him, tis Doctor Cayus.

Sir Hu. I had as leeuue you should tel me of a messe
of poredge,

He is an arant lowsie beggerly knaue :
And he is a coward beside.

Pa. Why Ile laie my life tis the man
That he should fight withall.

Enter DOCTOR and the Host, they offer to fight.

Shal. Keep them asunder, take away their weapons.

Host. Disarme, let them question.

Shal. Let them keep their limbs hole, and hack our
English.

Doc. Hark van vrd in your eare. You be vn daga
And de Iack, coward preest.

Sir Hu. Harke you, let vs not be laughing stockes
to other mens humors. By Ieshu I will knock your
vrinalls about your knaues cockcomes, for missing your
meetings and appointments.

Doc. O Ieshu mine host of de garter, Iohn Rogoby,
Haue I not met him at de place he make apoint,
Haue I not ?

Sir Hu. So kad vdge me, this is the pointment place,
Witnes by my Host of the garter.

Host. Peace I say gawle and gawlia, French and
Wealch,
Soule curer, and bodie curer.

Doc. This is verie braue, excellent.

Host. Peace I say, heare mine host of the garter,
Am I wise ? am I polliticke ? am I Matchaul ?
Shall I lose my doctor ? No, he giues me the motiö
And the potions. Shall I lose my parson, my sir Hu ?
No, he giues me the prouerbes, and the nouerbes :
Giue me thy hand terrestriall,
So giue me thy hand celestiall :
So boyes of art I haue deceiued you both,
I haue directed you to wrong places,
Your hearts are mightie, your skins are whole,

Bardolfe laie their swords to pawne. Follow me lads
Of peace, follow me. Ha, ra, la. Follow.

[*Exit Host.*

Shal. Afore God a mad host, come let vs goe.

Doc. I begar haue you mocka may thus?

I will be euen met you my Iack Host.

Sir Hu. Giue me your hand Doctor Cayus,
We be all friends :

But for mine hosts foolish knauery, let me alone.

Doc. I dat be vell, begar I be friends.

[*Exit omnes.*

Enter M. FOORD.

For. The time drawes on he shuld come to my house,
Well wife, you had best worke closely,
Or I am like to goe beyond your cunning :
I now wil seek my guesse that comes to dinner,
And in good time see where they all are come.

*Enter SHALLOW, PAGE, HOST, SLENDER, DOCTOR, and
SIR HUGH.*

By my faith a knot well met : your welcome all.

Pa. I thanke you good M. Ford.

For. Welcome good M. Page,

I would your daughter were here.

Pa. I thank you sir, she is very well at home.

Slen. Father Page I hope I haue your consent
For Misteris Anne?

Pa. You haue sonne Slender, but my wife here,
Is altogether for maister Doctor.

Doc. Begar I tanck her hartily :

Host. But what say you to yong Maister Fenton?
He capers, he daunces, he writes verses, he smelles
All April and May : he wil cary it, he wil carit,
Tis in his betmes he wil carite.

Pa. My host not with my cōsent : the gentleman is Wilde, he knowes too much : If he take her,
Let him take her simply : for my goods goes
With my liking, and my liking goes not that way.

For. Well I pray go home with me to dinner :
Besides your cheare Ile shew you wonders : Ile
Shew you a monster. You shall go with me
M. Page, and so shall you sir Hugh, and you Maister
Doctor.

S Hu. If there be one in the company, I shal make
two :

Doc. And dere be ven to, I sall make de tird :

Sir Hu. In your teeth for shame,

Shal. wel, wel, God be with you, we shall haue the
fairer

Wooing at Maister Pages :

[*Exit SHALLOW and SLENDER,*

Host. Ile to my honest knight sir Iohn Falstaffe,
And drinke Canary with him. [*Exit host.*

Ford. I may chance to make him drinke in pipe wine,
First come gentlemen. [*Exit omnes.*

*Enter MISTRESSE FORD, with two of her men, and a
great buck basket.*

Mis. For. Sirrha, if your M. aske you whither
You carry this basket, say to the Launderers,
I hope you know how to bestow it?

Ser. I warrant you misteris. [*Exit seruant.*

Mis. For. Go get you in. Well sir Iohn,
I beleeeue I thall serue you such a trick,
You shall haue little mind to come againe.

Enter SIR IOHN.

Fal. Haue I caught my heauenlie Iewel ?
Why now let me die. I haue liued long inough,
This is the happie houre I haue desired to see,

Now shall I sin in my wish,
I would thy husband were dead.

Mis. For. Why how then sir Iohn?

Fal. By the Lord, Ide make thee my Ladie.

Mis. For. Alas sir Iohn, I should be a verie simple
Ladie.

Fal. Goe too, I see how thy eie doth emulate the
Diamond.

And how the arched bent of thy brow
Would become the ship tire, the tire vellet,
Or anie Venetian attire, I see it.

Mis. For. A plaine kercher sir Iohn, would fit me
better.

Fal. By the Lord thou art a traitor to saie so :
What made me loue thee? Let that perswade thee
Ther's somewhat extraordinarie in thee : Goe too
I loue thee :

Mistris Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, like one
Of these fellows that smels like Bucklers-berie,
In simple time, but I loue thee,
And none but thee.

Mis. For. Sir Iohn, I am afraid you loue misteris
Page.

Fal. I thou mightest as well saie
I loue to walke by the Counter gate,
Which is as hatefull to me
As the reake of a lime kill.

Enter MISTRESSE PAGE.

Mis. Pa. Mistresse Ford, Mis. Ford, where are you?

Mis. For. O Lord step aside good sir Iohn.

[*FALSTAFFE stands behind the arras.*

How now Misteris Page whats the matter?

Mis. Pa. Why your husband woman is cōming,
With halfe Windsor at his heeles,

To looke for a gentleman that he ses
Is hid in his house: his wifes sweet hart.

Mis. For. Speak louder. But I hope tis not true
Misteris Page.

Mis. Pa. Tis too true woman. Therefore if you
Haue any here, away with him, or your vndone for euer.

Mis. For. Alas mistresse Page, what shall I do?
Here is a gentleman my friend, how shall I do?

Mis. Pa. Gode body woman, do not stand what shal
I do, and what shall I do. Better any shift, rather then
you shamed. Looke heere, here's a buck-basket, if hee
be a man of any reasonable sise, heele in here.

Mis. For. Alas I feare he is too big.

Fal. Let me see, let me see, Ile in, Ile in,
Follow your friends counsell.

[*Aside.*

Mis. Pa. Fie sir Iohn is this your loue? Go too.

Fal. I loue thee, and none but thee:
Helpe me to conuey me hence,
Ile neuer come here more.

[*SIR IOHN goes into the basket, they put
cloathes ouer him, the two men car-
ries it away: FOORD meetes it, and
all the rest, PAGE, DOCTOR, PRIEST,
SLENDER, SHALLOW.*

Ford. Come pray along, you shall see all.
How now who goes heare? whither goes this?
Whither goes it? set it downe.

Mis. For. Now let it go, you had best meddle with
buck-washing.

Ford. Buck, good buck, pray come along,
Maister Page take my keyes: helpe to search. Good
Sir Hugh pray come along, helpe a little, a little,
Ile shew you all.

Sir Hu. By Ieshu these are iealosies & distemperes.

[*Exit omnes.*

Mis. Pa. He is in a pittifull taking.

Mis. I wonder what he thought

Whē my husband bad them set downe the basket.

Mis. Pa. Hang him dishonest slaue, we cannot vse
Him bad inough, This is excellent for your
Husbands icalousie.

Mi. For. Alas poore soule it grieues me at the hart,
But this will be a meanes to make him cease
His iealous fits, if Falstaffes loue increase.

Mis. Pa. Nay we wil send to Falstaffe once again,
Tis great pittie we should leaue him :
What wiues may be merry, and yet honest too.

Mi. For. Shall we be cōdemnd because we laugh?
Tis old, but true : still sowes eate all the draffe.

Enter all.

Mis. Pa. Here comes your husband, stand aside.

For. I can find no body within, it may be he lied.

Mis. Pa. Did you heare that?

Mis. For. I, I, peace.

For. Well Ile not let it go so, yet Ile trie further.

S. Hu. By Ieshu if there be any body in the kitchin
Or the cuberts, or the presse, or the buttery,
I am an arrant Iew : Now God plesse me :
You serue me well, do you not ?

Pa. Fie M. Ford you are to blame.

Mis. Pa. Ifaith tis not well M. Ford to suspect
Her thus without cause.

Doc. No by my trot it be no vell :

For. Wel I pray bear with me, M. Page pardō me.
I suffer for it, I suffer for it :

Sir Hu : You suffer for a bad conscience looke you
now :

Ford : Well I pray no more, another time Ile tell
you all :

The mean time go dine with me, pardō me wife,
I am sorie. M. Page pray goe in to dinner,
Another time Ile tell you all.

Pa : Wel let it be so, and to morrow I inuite you all
To my house to dinner : and in the morning wee
A birding, I haue an excellent Hauke for the bush.

Ford : Let it be so : Come M. Page, come wife :
I pray you come in all, your welcome, pray come in.

Sir Hu : By so kad vdgme, M. Fordes is
Not in his right wittes :

[*Exit omnes* :

Enter SIR IOHN FALSTAFFE.

Fal : Bardolfe brew me a pottle sack presently :

Bar : With Egges sir ?

Fal : Simply of it selfe, Ile none of these pullets
sperme

In my drinke : goe make haste.

Haue I liued to be carried in a basket and throwne into
the Thames like a barow of Butchers offoll. Well, and
I be serued such another tricke, Ile giue them leaue to
take out my braines and butter them, and giue them to
a dog for a new-yeares gift. Sblood, the rogues slided
me in with as little remorse as if they had gone to drowne
a blind bitches puppies in the litter : and they might
know by my sise I haue a kind of alacritie in sinking :
and the bottom had bin as deep as hell I should downe.
I had bene drowned, but that the shore was sheluie and
somewhat shallowe : a death that I abhorre. For you
know the water swelles a man : and what a thing should
I haue bene whē I had bene swelled ? By the Lord a
mountaine of money. Now is the Sacke brewed ?

Bar. I sir, there's a woman below would speake with
you.

Fal. Bid her come vp. Let me put some Sacke among

this cold water, for my belly is as cold as if I had swallowed snow-balles for pilles.

Enter MISTRESSE QUICKLY.

Now whats the newes with you ?

Quic. I come from misteris Ford forsooth.

Fal. Misteris Ford, I haue had Ford inough,
I haue bene throwne into the Ford, my belly is full
Of Ford : she hath tickled mee.

Quic. O Lord sir, she is the sorrowfullest woman that
her seruants mistooke, that euer liued. And sir, she would
desire you of all loues you will meet her once againe, to
morrow sir, betweene ten and eleuen, and she hopes to
make amends for all.

Fal. Ten, and eleuen, saiest thou ?

Quic. I forsooth.

Fal. Well, tell her Ile meet her. Let her but think
Of mans frailtie : Let her iudge what man is,
And then thinke of me. And so farwell.

Quic. Youle not faile sir ?

[Exit MISTRESSE QUICKLY.]

Fal. I will not faile. Commend me to her.
I wonder I heare not of M. Brooke, I like his
Mony well. By the masse here he is.

Enter BROOKE.

For. God saue you sir.

Fal. Welcome good M. Brooke. You come to know
how matters goes.

Ford. Thats my comming indeed sir Iohn.

Fal. M. Brooke I will not lie to you sir,
I was there at my appointed time.

For. And how sped you sir ?

Fal. Verie ilfauouredly sir.

For. Why sir, did she change her determination ?

Fal. No M. Brooke, but you shall heare. After we had kissed and imbraced, and as it were euen amid the prologue of our incounter, who should come, but the iealous knaue her husband, and a rabble of his companions at his heeles, thither prouoked and instigated by his distemper. And what to do thinke you ? to search for his wiues loue. Euen so, plainly so.

For. While ye were there ?

Fal. Whilst I was there.

For. And did he search and could not find you ?

Fal. You shall heare sir, as God would haue it,
A litle before comes me one Pages wife,
Giues her intelligence of her husbands .
Approach : and by her inuention, and Fords wiues
Distraction, conueyed me into a buck basket.

Ford. A buck basket !

Fal. By the Lord a buck basket, rammed me in
With foule shirts, stokins, greasie napkins,
That M. Brooke, there was a compound of the most
Villanous smel, that euer offended nostrill.
Ile tell you M. Brooke, by the Lord for your sake
I suffered three egregious deaths : First to be
Crammed like a good bilbo, in the circumference
Of a pack, Hilt to point, heele to head : and then to
Be stewed in my owne grease like a Dutch dish :
A man of my kidney ; by the Lord it was maruell I
Escaped suffication ; and in the heat of all this,
To be throwne into Thames like a horsehoo hot :
Maister Brooke, thinke of that hissing heate, Maister
Brooke.

Ford. Well sir then my shute is void ?
Youle vndertake it no more ?

Fal. M. Brooke, Ile be throwne into Etna
As I haue bene in the Thames,
Ere I thus leaue her : I haue receiued

Another appointment of meeting,
Between ten and eleuen is the houre.

Ford: Why sir, tis almost ten alreadie:

Fal. Is it? why then will I addresse my selfe
For my appointment: M. Brooke come to me soone
At night, and you shall know how I speed,
And the end shall be, you shall enioy her loue:
You shall cuckold Foord: come to mee soone at
at night. [*Exit* FALSTAFFE.

For. Is this a dreame? Is it a vision?
Maister Ford, maister Ford, awake maister Ford,
There is a hole made in your best coat M. Ford,
And a man shall not only endure this wrong,
But shall stand vnder the taunt of names,
Lucifer is a good name, Barbason good: good
Diuels names: But cuckold, wittold, godeso
The diuel himselfe hath not such a name:
And they may hang hats here, and napkins here
Vpon my hornes: Well Ile home, I ferit him,
And vnlesse the diuel himselfe should aide him,
Ile search vnpossible places: Ile about it,
Least I repent too late: [*Exit omnes*.

Enter M. FENTON, PAGE, and MISTRESSE QUICKLY.

Fen: Tell me sweet Nan, how doest thou yet resolute,
Shall foolish Slender haue thee to his wife?
Or one as wise as he, the learned Doctor?
Shall such as they enioy thy maiden hart?
Thou knowst that I haue alwaies loued thee deare,
And thou hast oft times swore the like to me.

An: Good M. Fenton, you may assure your selfe
My hart is settled vpon none but you,
Tis as my father and mother please:
Get their consent, you quickly shall haue mine.

Fen: Thy father thinks I loue thee for his wealth,
Tho I must needs confesse at first that drew me,

But since thy vertues wiped that trash away,
 I loue thee Nan, and so deare is it set,
 That whilst I liue, I nere shall thee forget.

Quic. Godes pitie here comes her father.

Enter M. PAGE, *his wife*, M. SHALLOW, *and* SLENDER.

Pa. M. Fenton I pray what make you here?
 You know my answere sir, shees not for you :
 Knowing my vow, to blame to vse me thus.

Fen. But heare me speake sir.

Pa. Pray sir get you gon : Come hither daughter,
 Sonne Slender let me speak with you. [*they whisper.*]

Quic. Speake to Misteris Page.

Fen. Pray misteris Page let me haue your cōsent.

Mis. Pa. Ifaith M. Fentō tis as my husband please.
 For my part Ile neither hinder you, nor further you.

Quic. How say you this was my doings?
 I bid you speake to misteris Page.

Fen. Here nurse, theres a brace of angels to drink,
 Worke what thou canst for me, farwell. [*Exit* FEN.]

Quic. By my troth so I will, good hart.

Pa. Come wife, you an I will in, weelee leaue M.
 Slēder

And my daughter to talke together. M. Shallow,
 You may stay sir if you please.

[*Exit* PAGE *and* *his wife.*]

Shal. Mary I thanke you for that :
 To her cousin, to her.

Slen. Ifaith I know not what to say.

An. Now M. Slender, whats your will?

Slen. Godeso theres a Iest indeed : why misteris An,
 I neuer made wil yet : I thāk God I am wise inough for
 that.

Shal. Fie cusse fie, thou art not right,
 O thou hadst a father.

Slen. I had a father misteris Anne, good vncle
Tell the Iest how my father stole the goose out of
The henloft. All this is nought, harke you mistresse
Anne.

Shal. He will make you ioynter of three hundred pound
a yeare, he shall make you a gentlewoman.

Slend. I be God that I will, come cut and long taile,
as good as any is in Glostershire, vnder the degree of a
Squire.

An. O God how many grosse faults are hid,
And couered in three hundred pound a yeare?
Well M. Slender, within a day or two Ile tell you
mo re

Slend. I thanke you good misteris Anne, vncle I shall
haue her.

Quic. M. Shallow, M. Page would pray you to come
you, and you M. Slender, and you mistris An.

Slend. Well Nurse, if youle speake for me, Ile giue
you more than Ile talke of.

[*Exit omnes but QUICKLY.*

Quic. Indeed I will, Ile speake what I can for you,
But specially for M. Fenton :
But specially of all for my Maister.
And indeed I will do what I can for them all three.

[*Exit.*

Enter MISTERIS FORD and her two men.

Mis For. Do you heare? when your M. comes take
vp this basket as you did before, and if your M. bid you
set it downe, obey him.

Ser. I will forsooth.

Enter SYR IOHN.

Mis For. Syr Iohn welcome.

Fal. What are you sure of your husband now?

Mis. For. He is gone a birding sir Iohn, and I hope will not come home yet.

Enter MISTRESSE PAGE.

Gods body here is misteris Page,
Step behind the arras good sir Iohn.

[He steps behind the arras.]

Mis. Pa. Misteris Ford, why woman, your husband is in his old vaine againe, hees comming to search for your sweet heart, but I am glad he is not here.

Mis. For. O God misteris Page the knight is here, what shall I do ?

Mis. Pa. Why then you'r vndone woman, vnles you make some meanes to shift him away.

Mis. For. Alas I know no meanes, vnlesse we put him in the basket againe.

Fal. No Ile come no more in the basket,
Ile creep vp into the chimney.

Mis. For. There they vse to discharge their Fowling peeces.

Fal. Why then Ile goe out of doores.

Mis. Pa. Then your vndone, your but a dead man.

Fal. For Gods sake deuise any extremitie,
Rather then a mischiefe.

Mis. Pa. Alas I know not what meanes to make,
If there were any womans apparell would fit him.
He might put on a gowne and a mufler,
And so escape.

Mi. For. Thats wel remembred, my maids Aunt Gillian of Brainford, hath a gowne aboue.

Mis. Pa. And she is altogether as fat as he.

Mis. For. I that will serue him of my word.

Mis. Pa. Come goe with me sir Iohn, Ile helpe to dresse you.

Fal. Come for God sake, any thing.

[Exit MIS. PAGE, & SIR IOHN.]

Enter M. FORD, PAGE, PRIEST, SHALLOW, the two men carries the basket, and FORD meets it.

For. Come along I pray, you shal know the cause,
How now whither goe you? Ha whither go you?
Set downe the basket you slaue,
You panderly rogue set it downe.

Mis. For. What is the reason that you vse me thus?

For. Come hither set downe the basket,
Misteris Ford the modest woman,
Misteris Ford the vertuous woman,
She that hath the iealous foole to her husband,
I mistrust you without cause do I not?

Mis. For. I Gods my record do you. And if you
mistrust me in any ill sort.

Ford. Well sed brazen face, hold it out,
You youth in a basket, come out here,
Pull out the cloathes, search.

Hu. Ieshu plesse me, will you pull vp your wiues
cloathes?

Pa. Fie M. Ford you are not to go abroad if you be
in these fits.

Sir Hu. By so kad vdge me, tis verie necessarie
He were put in pethlem.

For. M. Page, as I am an honest man M. Page,
There was one conueyd out of my house here yesterday
out of this basket, why may he not be here now?

Mi. For. Come mistris Page, bring the old womã
downe.

For. Old woman, what old woman?

Mi. For. Why my maidens Ant, Gilliã of Brainford.
A witch, haue I not forewarned her my house,
Alas we are simple we, we know not what
Is brought to passe vnder the colour of fortune-
Telling. Come downe you witch, come downe.

Enter FALSTAFFE disguised like an old woman, and MISTERIS PAGE with him, FORD beates him, and hee runnes away.

. Away you witch get you gone.

Sir Hu. By Ieshu I verily thinke she is a witch indeed,

I espied vnder her muffler a great beard.

Ford. Pray come helpe me to search, pray now.

Pa. Come weelee go for his minds sake.

[Exit omnes.]

Mi. For. By my troth he beat him most extreemly.

Mi. Pa. I am glad of it, what shall we proceed any further?

Mi. For. No faith, now if you will let vs tell our husbands of it. For mine I am sure hath almost fretted himselfe to death.

Mi. Pa. Content, come weelee goe tell them all,
And as they agree, so will we proceed. *[Exit both.]*

Enter HOST and BARDOLFE.

Bar. Syr heere be three Gentlemen come from the Duke the Stranger sir, would haue your horse.

Host. The Duke, what Duke? let me speake with the Gentlemen, do they speake English?

Bar. Ile call them to you sir.

Host. No Bardolfe, let them alone, Ile sauce them:
They haue had my house a weeke at command,
I haue turned away my other guesse,
They shall haue my horses Bardolfe,
They must come off, Ile sawce them. *[Exit omnes.]*

Enter FORD, PAGE, their wiues, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.

SIR HU.

Ford. Well wife, heere take my hand, vpon my soule

I loue thee dearer then I do my life, and joy I haue so true and constant wife, my iealousie shall neuer more offend thee.

Mi. For. Sir I am glad, & that which I haue done, Was nothing else but mirth and modestie.

Pa. I misteris Ford, Falstaffe hath all the grieffe, And in this knauerie my wife was the chiefe.

Mi. Pa. No knauery husband, it was honest mirth.

Hu. Indeed it was good pastimes & merriments.

Mis. For. But sweete heart shall wee leaue olde Falstaffe so?

Mis. Pa. O by no meanes, send to him againe.

Pa. I do not thinke heele come being so much deceiued.

For. Let me alone, Ile to him once againe like Brooke, and know his mind whether heele come or not.

Pa. There must be some plot laide, or heele not come.

Mis. Pa. Let vs alone for that. Heare my deuce. Oft haue you heard since Horne the hunter dyed, That women to affright their litle children, Ses that he walkes in shape of a great stagge. Now for that Falstaffe hath bene so deceiued, As that he dares not venture to the house, Weele send him word to meet vs in the field, Disguised like Horne, with huge horns on his head, The houre shalbe iust betweene twelue and one, And at that time we will meet him both : Then would I haue you present there at hand, With litle boyes disguised and dressed like Fayries, For to affright fat Falstaffe in the woods. And then to make a period to the Iest, Tell Falstaffe all, I thinke this will do best.

Pa. Tis excellent, and my daughter Anne, Shall like a litle Fayrie be disguised.

Mis. Pa. And in that Maske Ile make the Doctor steale my daughter An, & ere my husband knowes it, to carrie her to Church, and marrie her.

Mis For. But who will buy the silkes to tyre the boyes ?

Pa. That will I do, and in a robe of white Ile cloath my daughter, and aduertise Slender To know her by that signe, and steale her thence. And vnknowne to my wife, shall marrie her.

Hu. So kad vdge me the deuises is excellent. I will also be there, and be like a Iackanapes, And pinch him most cruelly for his lecheries.

Mis. Pa. Why then we are reuenged sufficiently. First he was carried and throwne in the Thames, Next beaten well, I am sure youle witnes that.

Mi. For. Ile lay my life this makes him nothing fat.

Pa. Well lets about this stratagem, I long To see deceit deceiued, and wrong haue wrong.

For. Well send to Falstaffe, and if he come thither, Twil make vs smile and laugh one moneth together.

[*Exit omnes.*]

Enter Host and SIMPLE.

Host. What would thou haue boore, what thick-skin ? Speake, breath, discus, short, quick, briefe, snap.

Sim. Sir, I am sent frō my M. to sir Iohn Falstaffe.

Host. Sir Iohn, theres his Castle, his standing-bed, his trundle-bed, his chamber is painted about with the story of the prodigall, fresh and new, go knock, heele speake like an Antripophiginian to thee :

Knock I say.

Sim. Sir I should speak with an old woman that went vp into his chamber.

Host. An old woman, the knight may be robbed, Ile

call bully knight, bully Sir Iohn. Speake from thy Lungs military : it is thine host, thy Ephesian calls.

Fal. Now mine Host.

Host. Here is a Bohemian tarter bully, tarries the comming downe of the fat woman : Let her descēd bully, let her descend, my chambers are honorable, pah priuasie, fie.

Fal. Indeed mine host there was a fat woman with me, But she is gone.

Enter SIR IOHN.

Sim. Pray sir was it not the wise woman of Brainford ?

Fal. Marry was it Musselshell, what would you ?

Sim. Marry sir my maister Slender sent me to her, To know whether one Nim that hath his chaine, Cousoned him of it, or no.

Fal. I talked with the woman about it.

Sim. And I pray sir what ses she ?

Fal. Marry she ses the very same man that Beguiled maister Slender of his chaine, Cousoned him of it.

Sim. May I be bolde to tell my maister so sir ?

Fal. I tike, who more bolde.

Sim. I thanke you sir, I shall make my maister a glad man at these tydings, God be with you sir.

Host. Thou art clarkly sir Iohn, thou art clarkly, Was there a wise woman with thee ?

Fal. Marry was there mine host, one that taught Me more wit then I learned this 7. yeare, And I paid nothing for it, But was paid for my learning.

Enter BADOLFE.

Bar. O Lord sir cousonage, plaine cousonage.

Host. Why man, where be my horses ? where be the Germanes ?

Bar. Rid away with your horses :
After I came beyond Maidenhead,
They flung me in a slow of myre, & away they ran.

Enter Doctor.

Doc. Where be my Host de gartyre ?

Host. O here sir in perplexitie.

Doc. I cannot tell vad be dad,
But begar I will tell you van ting,
Dear be a Garmaine Duke come to de Court,
Has cosened all de host of Branford,
And Redding : begar I tell you for good will,
Ha, ha, mine Host, am I euen met you. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR HUGH.

Sir Hu. Where is mine Host of the gartyr ?
Now my Host, I would desire you looke you now,
To haue a care of your entertainments,
For there is three sorts of cosen garmombles,
Is cosen all the Host of Maidenhead & Readings,
Now you are an honest man, and a scuruy beggerly
lowsie knaue beside :

And can point wrong places,
I tell you for good will, grate why mine Host. [*Exit.*

Host. I am cosened Hugh, and coy Bardolfe,
Sweet knight assist me, I am cosened. [*Exit.*

Fal. Would all the worell were cosened for me,
For I am cousoned and beaten too.
Well, I neuer prospered since I forswore
My selfe at Primero : and my winde
Were but long inough to say my prayers,
Ide repent, now from whence come you ?

Enter MISTRESSE QUICKLY.

Quic. From the two parties forsooth.

Fal. The diuell take the one partie,

And his dam the other,
 And theyle be both bestowed.
 I haue endured more for their sakes,
 Then man is able to endure.

Quic. O Lord sir, they are the sorrowfulst creatures
 That euer liued : specially mistresse Ford,
 Her husband hath beaten her that she is all
 Blacke and blew poore soule.

Fal. What tellest me of blacke and blew,
 I haue bene beaten all the colours in the Rainbow,
 And in my escape like to a bene apprehended
 For a witch of Brainford, and set in the stockes

Quic. Well sir, she is a sorrowfull woman,
 And I hope when you heare my errant,
 Youle be perswaded to the contrarie.

Fal. Come goe with me into my chamber, Ile heare
 thee. *[Exit omnes.]*

Enter Host and FENTON.

Host. Speake not to me sir, my mind is heauie,
 I haue had a great losse.

Fen. Yet heare me, and as I am a gentleman,
 Ile giue you a hundred pound toward your losse.

Host. Well sir Ile heare you, and at least keep your
 counsell.

Fen. Thē thus my host. Tis not vnknown to you,
 The feruent loue I beare to young Anne Page,
 And mutally her loue againe to me:
 But her father still against her choise,
 Doth seeke to marrie her to foolish Slender,
 And in a robe of white this night disguised,
 Wherein fat Falstaffe had a mightie scare,
 Must Slender take her and carrie her to Catlen,
 And there vnknowne to any, marrie her.
 Now her mother still against that match,
 And firme for Doctor Cayus, in a robe of red

By her deuice, the Doctor must steale her thence,
And she hath giuen consent to goe with him.

Host. Now which means she to deceiue, father or
mother ?

Fen. Both my good Host, to go along with me.
Now here it rests, that you would procure a priest,
And tarrie readie at the appointment place,
To giue our hearts vnited matrimonie.

Host. But how will you come to steale her from among
thē ?

Fen. That hath sweet Nan and I agreed vpon,
And by a robe of white, the which she weares,
With ribones pendant flaring bout her head,
I shalbe sure to know her, and conuey her thence,
And bring her where the priest abides our cōming,
And by thy furtherance there be married.

Host. Well, husband your deuice, Ile to the Vicar;
Bring you the maide, you shall not lacke a Priest.

Fen. So shall I euermore be bound vnto thee.
Besides Ile alwaies be thy faithfull friend. [*Exit omnes.*]

Enter SIR IOHN, *with a Bucks head vpon him.*

Fal. This is the third time, well Ile venter,
They say there is good luck in odd numbers,
Ioue transformed himselfe into a bull,
And I am here a Stag, and I thinke the fattest
In all Windsor forrest : well I stand here
For Horne the hunter, waiting my Does comming.

Enter MISTRIE PAGE, *and* MISTRIE FORD.

Mis. Pa. Sir Iohn, where are you ?

Fal. Art thou come my doe ? what and thou too ?
Welcome Ladies.

Mi. For. I I sir Iohn, I see you will not faile,
Therefore you deserue far better then our loues,
But it grieues me for your late crosses.

Fal. This makes amends for all.

Come diuide me betweene you, each a hanch,
For my horns Ile bequeath thē to your husbands,
Do I speake like Horne the hunter, ha?

Mis. Pa. God forgiue me, what noise is this?

[There is a noise of hornes, the two women run away.]

Enter SIR HUGH like a Satyre, and boyes drest like Fayries, mistresse Quickly, like the Queene of Fayries: they sing a song about him, and afterward speake.

Quic. You Fayries that do haunt these shady groues,
Looke round about the wood if you can espie
A mortall that doth haunt our sacred round:
If such a one you can espie, giue him his due,
And leaue not till you pinch him blacke and blew:
Giue them their charge Puck ere they part away.

Sir Hu. Come hither Peane, go to the countrie houses,
And when you finde a slut that lies a sleepe,
And all her dishes foule, and roome vnswept,
With your long nailes pinch her till she crie,
And sweare to mend her sluttish huswiferie.

Fai. I warrant you I will performe your will.

Hu. Where is Pead? go you & see where Brokers
sleep,

And fox-eyed Seriants with their mase,
Goe laie the Proctors in the street,
And pinch the lowsie Seriants face:
Spare none of these when they are a bed,
But such whose nose lookes plew and red.

Quic. Away begon, his mind fulfill,
And looke that none of you stand still.
Some do that thing, some do this,
All do something, none amis.

Hir. sir Hu. I smell a man of middle-earth.

Fal. God blesse me from that wealch Fairie.

Quic. Looke euery one about this round,

And if that any here be found,
 For his presumption in this place,
 Spare neither legge, arme, head, nor face.

Sir Hu. See I haue spied one by good luck,
 His bodie man, his head a buck.

Fal. God send me good fortune now, and I care not.

Quic. Go strait, and do as I commaund,
 And take a Taper in your hand,
 And set it to his fingers endes,
 And if you see it him offends,
 And that he starteth at the flame,
 Then is he mortall, know his name :
 If with an F. it doth begin,
 Why then be shure he is full of sin.
 About it then, and know the truth,
 Of this same metamorphised youth.

Sir Hu. Giue me the Tapers, I will try
 And if that he loue venery.

[They put the Tapers to his fingers, and he starts.]

Sir Hu. It is right indeed, he is full of lecheries and
 iniquitie.

Quic. A little distant from him stand,
 And euery one take hand in hand,
 And compasse him within a ring,
 First pinch him well, and after sing.

[Here they pinch him, and sing about him, & the Doctor comes one way & steales away a boy in red. And Slender another way he takes a boy in greene : And Fenton steales misteris Anne, being in white. And a noyse of hunting is made within : and all the Fairies runne away. Falstaffe pulles of his bucks head, and rises vp. And enters M. Page, M. Ford, and their wiues, M. Shallow, Sir Hugh.]

Fal. Horne the hunter quoth you : am I a ghost ?
 Sblood the Fairies hath made a ghost of me :
 What hunting at this time at night ?
 Ile lay my life the mad Prince of Wales
 Is stealing his fathers Deare. How now who haue
 We here, what is all Windsor stirring ? Are you there ?

Shal. God saue you sir Iohn Falstaffe.

Sir Hu. God plesse you sir Iohn, God plesse you.

Pa. Why how now sir Iohn, what a pair of horns in
 your hand ?

Ford. Those hornes he ment to place vpon my head,
 And M. Brooke and he should be the men :
 Why how now sir Iohn, why are you thus amazed ?
 We know the Fairies man that pinched you so,
 Your throwing in the Thames, your beating well,
 And whats to come sir Iohn, that can we tell.

Mi. Pa. Sir Iohn tis thus, your dishonest meanes
 To call our credits into question,
 Did make vs vndertake to our best,
 To turne your leaud lust to a merry Iest.

Fal. Iest, tis well, haue I liued to these yeares
 To be gulled now, now to be ridden ?
 Why then these were not Fairies ?

Mis. Pa. No sir Iohn but boyes.

Fal. By the Lord I was twice or thrise in the mind
 They were not, and yet the grosnesse
 Of the fopperie perswaded me they were.
 Well, and the fine wits of the Court heare this,
 Thayle so whip me with their keene Iests,
 That thayle melt me out like tallow,
 Drop by drop out of my grease. Boyes !

Sir Hu. I trust me boyes sir Iohn : and I was
 Also a Fairie that did helpe to pinch you.

Fal. I, tis well I am your May-pole,
 You haue the start of mee,

Am I ridden too with a wealch goate ?

With a peece of toasted cheese ?

Sir Hu. Butter is better than cheese sir Iohn,
You are all butter, butter,

For. There is a further matter yet sir Iohn,
There's 20. pound you borrowed of M. Brooke Sir Iohn,
And it must be paid to M. Ford Sir Iohn.

Mi. For. Nay husband let that go to make amèds,
Forgiue that sum, and so weelee all be friends.

For. Well here is my hand, all's forgiuen at last.

Fal. It hath cost me well,
I haue bene well pinched and washed.

Enter the DOCTOR.

Mi. Pa. Now M. Doctor, sonne I hope you are.

Doct. Sonne begar you be de ville voman,
Begar I tinck to marry metres An, and begar
Tis a whorson garson Iack boy.

Mis. Pa. How a boy ?

Doct. I begar a boy.

Pa. Nay be not angry wife, Ile tell thee true,
It was my plot to deceiue thee so :
And by this time your daughter's married
To M. Slender, and see where he comes.

Enter SLENDER.

Now sonne Slender,
Where's your bride ?

Slen. Bride, by Gods lyd I thinke theres neuer a man
in the worrell hath that crosse fortune that I haue :
begod I could cry for verie anger.

Pa. Why whats the matter sonne Slender ?

Slen. Sonne, nay by God I am none of your son.

Pa. No, why so ?

Slen. Why so God saue me, tis a boy I haue married.

Pa. How a boy? why did you mistake the word?

Slen. No neither, for I came to her in red as you bad me, and I cried mum, and hee cried budget, so well as euer you heard, and I haue married him.

Sir Hu. Jeshu M. Slender, cannot you see but marrie boyes?

Pa. O I am vext at hart, what shal I do?

Enter FENTON and ANNE.

Mis. Pa. Here comes the man that hath deceiued vs all :

How now daughter, where haue you bin?

An. At Church forsooth.

Pa. At Church, what haue you done there?

Fen. Married to me, nay sir neuer storme, Tis done sir now, and cannot be vndone.

Ford : Ifaith M. Page neuer chafe your selfe, She hath made her choise wheras her hart was fixt, Then tis in vaine for you to storme or fret.

Fal. I am glad yet then your arrow hath glanced.

Mi. For. Come mistris Page, Ile be bold with you, Tis pitie to part loue that is so true.

Mis. Pa. Altho that I haue missed in my intent, Yet I am glad my husbands match was crossed, Here M. Fenton, take her, and God giue thee ioy.

Sir Hu. Come M. Page, you must needs agree.

Fo. I yfaith sir come, you see your wife is wel pleased

Pa. I cannot tel, and yet my hart's well eased, And yet it doth me good the Doctor missed. Come hither Fenton, and come hither daughter, Go too, you might haue stai'd for my good will But since your choise is made of one you loue, Here take her Fenton, & both happie proue.

Sir Hu. I will also dance & eat plums at your weddings.

Ford. All parties pleased, now let vs in to feast,
And laugh at Slender, and the Doctors ieast.
He hath got the maiden, each of you a boy
To waite vpon you, so God giue you ioy,
And sir Iohn Falstaffe now shal you keep your word,
For Brooke this night shall lye with mistris Ford.

Exit omnes.

FINIS.

NOTES.

Page 1, line 7. Syr Hugh the Welch Knight.] Dr. Farmer adduces this error as a proof that Shakespeare never superintended the publication of this play. See Malone's Shakespeare by Boswell, vol. viii. p. 4. *Sir* seems to have been a title formerly appropriated to such of the inferior clergy as were only *readers* of the service, not admitted to be *preachers*, and, therefore, were held in lower estimation. Malone gives us the following extract from the parish registers at Cheltenham:—"1574, August 31, Sir John Evans, curate of Cheltenham, buried." This coincidence of name is somewhat curious, but the designation was formerly very commonly given to all the inferior clergy of England.

Page 1, line 10. Auncient.] That is, *ensign*.

Page 1, line 17. Printed by T. C.] That is, *Thomas Creede*, who printed several of the early quartos. It was often the custom of printers of the time merely to give their initials.

Page 3, line 1. The succession of scenes is exactly the same as in the amended play, although not so divided, with the exception of the fourth and fifth scenes of the third act, which are transposed. The first scene of the fourth act and the first four scenes of the fifth act in the amended play are entirely omitted in this sketch.

Page 3, line 8 The councill shall know it.] By the council is only meant the court of Star-chamber, composed chiefly of the king's council sitting in *Camera Stelkata*, which took cognizance of atrocious riots. The two expressions are divided in the amended play. Sir John Harrington, in his *Epigrams*, 1618, says,

"No marvel, men of such a sumptuous dyet
Were brought into the Star-Chamber for a ryot."

See also the *Magnetick Lady*, act iii. sc. 4, and Malone's Shakespeare by Boswell, vol. viii., pp. 8, 13.

Page 4, line 8. Councill.] The amended play reads "King," which shows, probably, that it was written after the death of Elizabeth.

Page 4, line 11. But not kissed your keepers daughter.] The commentators think this a burden of some old ballad. Sir Walter Scott gives us a different explanation in his novel of "Kenilworth:"—

"*Sussex*. By my faith, I wish Will Shakespeare no harm. He is a stout man at quarter-staff, and single falchion, though, as I am told, a halting fellow; and he stood, they say, a tough fight with the rangers of old Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecot, when he broke his deer-park, and kissed his keeper's daughter.

"*Elizabeth*. That matter was heard in council, and we will not have this fellow's offence exaggerated—there was no kissing in the matter, and the defendant put the denial on record."

Page 4, line 16. Twere knowne in counsell.] This and the preceding passage remain unaltered in the amended play, and Steevens suggests that Falstaff quibbles between *council* and *counsel*. In this sense, Falstaff's meaning seems to be—"Twere better for you if it were known only in *secrecy*, i. e. among your friends: a more public complaint would subject you to ridicule. Ritson thinks the ordinary interpretation just, but Malone justly adduces the spelling of the words in the old quarto as an argument in favour of Steevens' reading; and, from a MS. mentioned by Malone, it would appear that the equivoque was less strained then than it appears to be now.

Page 4, line 19. Good vrdes, good cabidge.] A pun, occasioned by Sir Hugh's broken pronunciation. *Wort* or *ort* was an old name for *cabbage*.

Page 4, line 23. Your cogging companions, Pistoll and Nym.] In the amended play, Slender terms them "coney-catching rascals." Both expressions amount to nearly the same import. He merely means to call them *sharpers*. In the amended play, Bardolph is introduced as having participated in the attack on Slender's purse.

Page 4, line 23. They carried mee, &c.] This sentence is omitted in the amended play, though necessary for the sense.

Page 4, line 29. Mill sixpences.] It appears, from a passage in Sir W. D'Avenant's *Newes from Plimouth*, that these mill-sixpences were used by way of counters to cast up money.

Page 4, line 29. Two faire shovell-boord shillings.] In the amended play we read, "two Edward shovel-boards, that cost me two shilling and two-pence a-piece of Yead Miller." This passage may serve to explain the other. Edward shovel-boards were the broad shillings of Edward VI. In Shadwell's time, it appears that the game of *shovel-board* was played with the shillings of Edward VI., for in his play of "The Miser," act iii. sc. 1, Cheatly says, "She persuaded him to play with hazard at backgammon, and he has already lost his *Edward shillings that he kept for shovel-board*,

and was pulling out broad pieces, that have not seen the sun these many years, when I came away." According to Douce, it used to be played early in the present century. See Malone's *Shakespeare*, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 22.

Page 4, line 32. Of this same laten bilbo.] Pistol is comparing Slender with the long and thin bilboa blades, made of *laten*, a metal composed of gold and brass. The comparison is of older date, for in *Grange's Garden*, 4to., Lond., 1577, we read,

"Hir husbandes wealth shall wasted be,
Upon hyr bilbowe boyes."

It may be mentioned, as some difference of opinion exists among the commentators, that laten metal is thus defined in the *Promptorium Parvulorum*, MS. Harl. 221, "Latone metal, auricalcum." The corresponding passage in the amended play is almost the same, and Becket (*Shakespeare's Himself Again*, 8vo. 1815, vol. i., p. 253) proposes to insert a stop after the word *laten*, making an exclamation of the remaining word; and the same writer tells us that laten is a composite metal. There is no necessity whatever for Becket's emendation, which is, to say the least of it, very unlikely to be correct.

Page 5, line 1. My honor is not for many words.] The amended play reads "humour" for "honor." The character of Nym is distinguished by the frequent repetition of this word; and its constant occurrence in the conversation of Shakespeare's time is well illustrated by Steevens by the following curious passage from "Humor's Ordinarie," 1607,

"Aske Humors what a feather he doth weare,
It is his *humour* (by the Lord) he 'll sweare;
Or what he doth with such a horse-taile locke,
Or why upon a whore he spendes his stocke,—
He hath a *humour* doth determine so:
Why in the stop-throte fashion he doth goe,
With scarfe about his necke, hat without band,—
It is his *humour*. Sweet sir, understand,
What cause his purse is so extreame distrest
That oftentimes is scarcely penny-blest;
Only a *humour*. If you question, why
His tongue is ne'er unfurnish'd with a lye,—
It is his *humour* too he doth protest:
Or why with sergeants he is so opprest,
That like to ghosts they haunt him ev'rie day;
A rascal *humour* doth not love to pay.

Object why bootes and spurres are still in sason,
 His *humour* answers, *humour* is his reason:
 If you perceive his wits in wetting shrunke,
 It cometh of a *humour* to be drunke.
 When you behold his lookes pale, thin, and poore,
 The occasion is, his *humour* and a whore :
 And every thing that he doth undertake,
 It is a veine, for senceless *humour's* sake."

Page 5, line 3. I will say *mary trap*.] Dr. Johnson supposes that this was the exclamation of insult when a man was caught in his own stratagem.

Page 5, line 23. What would you with me?] This part of the conversation between Slender and "sweet Anne Page" is introduced in act iii., sc. 4., of the amended play.

Page 6, line 2. Your afeard of a beare let loose.] "Est et alius postea locus theatri quoque formam habens, ursorum et taurorum venationibus destinatus, qui a postica parte alligati, a magnis illis canibus et molossis Anglicis, quos lingua vernacula *docken* appellant, mire exagitantur; ita tamen ut sæpe canes isti ab ursis vel tauris, dentibus arrepti, vel cornibus impetiti, de vita periclitari, aliquando etiam animam exhalare soleant, quibus sic vel sauciis vel lassis etatim substituuntur alii recentes et magis alacres. Accedit aliquando in fine hujus spectaculi, ursi plane excæcati flagellatio, ubi quinque vel sex, in circulo constituti, ursum flagellis misere excipiunt, qui licet alligatus, aufugere nequeat, alacriter tamen se defendit, circumstantes, et nimium appropinquantes, nisi recte et provide sibi caveant, prosternit ac flagella e manibus cædentium eripit atque confringit."—*Pauli Hentzneri Itinerarium*, 12mo. Noriberg. 1629, p. 196-7.

Page 6, line 5. Now that's meate and drinke to me.] A common low phrase, meaning great fondness for any thing. Touchstone, in "As You Like It," uses the same phrase—"It is meat and drink to me to see a clown." A writer of our own time, Mr. Dickens, introduces the phrase in one of his novels.

Page 6, line 6. Ile run yon to a beare.] The word "yon" is omitted in the second edition of this sketch, printed in 1619.

Page 6, line 16. I plaid three venies.] Slender means to say that the wager for which he played was a dish of stewed prunes, which was to be paid by him who received three *hits*. See Bullokar's "English Expositor," 8vo. Lond. 1616:—"Venie, a touch in the body at playing with weapons." Steevens gives several instances of the use of the word, but the above is quite sufficient. Shakespeare uses the word metaphorically in another play.

Page 6, line 18. *He hot my shin.*] “He *hit* my shin,” 4to. of 1619.

Page 6, line 31. Doctor Cayus house, the French Doctor.] I very much doubt whether Shakespeare had the learned founder of an eminent Cambridge College in his mind when he gave a name to this character, who, of course, intended as a satire on the foreign physicians of the time, who were so fashionable and popular with the English gentry. Farmer, however, says that the doctor was handed down as a sort of Rosicrucian, and mentions a MS., in the hands of Ames, entitled “The Secret Writing of Dr. Caius.” In the “Merry Tales of Jack of Dover,” 1604, a story told by “the fool of Windsor” begins thus:—“Upon a time there was in Windsor a certain simple outlandish doctor of physick belonging to the dean,” &c. The character may then possibly have been drawn from life; and, as Shakespeare would scarcely have introduced the real name into his play, he may have made quite an arbitrary choice.

Page 7, line 1. *Tis about Maister Slender.*] The reader will observe that the object of this letter is explained in the amended play, act i. sc. 2, being, of course, to solicit Mistress Quickly’s interest in favour of Slender in his suit to Anne Page. But Simple (p. 11) says the letter is *from* Slender; and yet the doctor writes a challenge to Sir Hugh, the why and wherefore of which proceeding is left entirely unexplained in the text of this copy of the play.

Page 7, line 4. *I must not be absent at the grace.*] Evans was the chaplain at the dinner party.

Page 7, line 12. *What sees my bully-rooke?*] Steevens says the spelling of this word is corrupted, and thereby its primitive meaning is lost. He says also that the latter part of this compound title is taken from the *rooks* at the game of chess. Douce says the word means a hectoring, cheating sharper; but Mr. Knight thinks that the host would not have applied such offensive terms to Falstaff, who sat “at ten pounds a week,” and in his expense was an “emperor.” The old editions generally have the word compounded, which is right; but in some it is *bully-rock*, which reading is adopted by Whaller.

Page 7, line 25. *Let me see thee froth and lyme.*] The folio reads “froth and live,” but Steevens adopts the reading of the old quartos. The host calls for an immediate specimen of Bardolph’s abilities as a tapster; and *frothing* beer and *liming* sack were tricks practised in the time of Shakespeare. The first was done by putting soap into the bottom of the tankard when they drew the beer; the other, by mixing *lime* with the sack to make it sparkle in the glass. “Froth and live” is sense, but a little forced; and to make it so we must suppose the host could guess, by his dexterity in frothing a pot to make it appear fuller than it was, how he would afterwards

succeed in the world. Falstaff himself complains of *limed* sack (first part of Henry IV., act ii. sc. 4). See Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii. p. 35; and Collier's Shakespeare, vol. iv. p. 265.

Page 7, line 29. A withered servingman, a fresh tapster.] Steevens thinks this is not improbably a parody on the old proverb—"A broken apothecary, a new doctor." See Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii. p. 35.

Page 7, line 33. O base Gongarian wight, wilt thou the spicket wild? This appears to be a parody on a line taken from one of the old bombast plays, beginning—

"O base Gongarian, wilt thou the distaff wield?"

which Steevens quotes without a special reference. In the folio it is *Hungarian*, which is a cant term. So in the "Merry Devil of Edmonton," 4to. Lond. 1608, the merry host says, "I have knights and colonels in my house, and must tend the *Hungarians*."

Page 8, line 3. I am almost out at the heeles.] A proverbial phrase for a vanishing purse.

Page 8, line 4. Let cybes issue.] Cf. King Lear, act v. sc. 1.

Page 8, line 6. Tinder boy.] The folio edition of 1623 reads "tinderbox."

Page 8, line 9. The good humor is to steale at a minutes rest.] Langton conjectures we ought to read "at a minim's rest," which Steevens thinks is confirmed by a passage in "Romeo and Juliet." Nym means to say, according to Hawkins, that the perfection of stealing is to do it in the shortest time possible.

Page 8, line 18. But now I am about no wast.] The same play upon words occurs in Heywood's "Epigrammes," 4to. Lond. 1562—

"Where am I least, husband? quoth he, in the *waist*;
Which cometh of this, thou art vengeance strait-lac'd.
Where am I biggest, wife? in the *waste*, quoth she,
For all is *waste* in you, as far as I see."

And again in Shirley's comedy of "The Wedding," 1629—"He is a great man indeed: something given to the *wast*, for he lives within no *reasonable compass*." (Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 38.)

Page 8, lines 21, 22. She carues, she discourses.] Jackson (Shakespeare's Genius Justified, 8vo. 1819, p. 17) proposes to read *craves*, and the emendation is certainly a very easy and simple one, had it been necessary for the sense; but a passage that Boswell produces from Vittoria Corombona seems to place the accuracy of the generally received reading out of doubt—"Your husband is wondrous discontented.—*Vit.* I did nothing

to displease him; *I carved to him* at supper time." See Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 38.

Page 8, line 22. Lyre.] The folio of 1623 reads "leere."

Page 8, line 25. He hath studied her well.] The folio of 1623 reads—"studied her *will*, and translated her *will*," the reading which Mr. Knight adopts in his last edition of the amended play. Malone prefers the reading of the quartos, and as either reading makes equally good sense, there is no reason to carp at Malone for adopting the earlier one.

Page 8, line 29. As many devils attend her.] In act i., sc. 3 of the amended play, we read, "as many devils entertain," the meaning of which is sufficiently evident, understanding the pun on the word *angels* in the speech immediately preceding this. The present reading entirely places the correctness of the commonly received reading beyond a doubt. Coleridge, however, in his "Literary Remains," vol. ii., p. 122, proposes to read—

"As many devils enter (or enter'd) swine;
And to her, boy, say I."

and believes it to be a somewhat profane, but not un-Shakespearian, allusion to the "legion" in St. Luke's Gospel. This cannot, I should think, be esteemed a particularly happy suggestion, and the above will show that there is no necessity whatever for a change.

Page 9, line 3. He be cheaters to them both.] The same joke is intended here as in the second part of Henry IV., act ii., sc. 4.

Page 9, line 14. Pinnice.] A pinnace is a small vessel with a square stern, having sails and oars, and carrying three masts; chiefly used (says Rolt, in his "Dictionary of Commerce,") as a scout for intelligence, and for landing of men. (Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 42.)

Page 9, line 16. Falstaffe will learne the humor of this age.] The folio of 1623 reads "the *honour* of the age." Mr. Knight adopts the reading of the folio. I believe that the contexts of the passage in the two different states of the play require the change.

Page 9, line 21. In my head.] These words are omitted in the folio of 1623. They are, however, inserted by Pope, in his edition of the amended play, from the early quarto.

Page 9, line 24. By Welkin and her Fairies.] The amended play reads, "by welkin, and her star."

Page 9, line 27. Jallowes.] That is, *jealousy*.

Page 10, line 6. A whay coloured beard.] Bottom enumerates different coloured beards in the "Midsummer Nights Dream," act i. sc. 2. Mr. Repton has published a very curious tract on the subject, 8vo. Lond. 1839. From the next line it would appear that beards were christened from

ancient personages. Cain and Judas are frequently represented in the old tapestries and pictures with *yellow* beards. Middleton alludes to an "Abram-coloured beard," and a "Judas-coloured beard." See his Works, by Dyce, vol. i., p. 259, and vol. iv., p. 47. The conjecture of Steevens that *Abram* may be a corruption of *auburn* is not a very happy one. Steevens brings several quotations illustrative of the matter, which may be seen in Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 46.

Page 10, line 9. Sir Yon.] A misprint, followed in the second edition, for "Sir You," or rather "Sir Hugh." Here is a disagreement, Simple saying afterwards that the letter is from Slender himself, and the mistake could not have been intended to deceive the Doctor, or he would have had no reason in sending a challenge to Evans. See a previous note at p. 57.

Page 10, line 29. Who.] The 4to edition of 1619 reads "hoe."

Page 11, line 2. Whose.] That is, *who's*.

Page 11, line 6. And.] This word is omitted in the 4to of 1619.

Page 11, line 29. O God, what a furious man is this.] This speech and the following one are of course spoken aside.

Page 13, line 10. Line for line, word for word.] This idea of the identity of the love letters seems to be original: at least, it is not found in any of the old tales upon which the play is supposed to be founded. The late Mr. Hook has introduced a similar incident in his novel of "Jack Brag."

Page 13, line 31. And Cuckoo birds appeare.] One of the numerous Shakespearian allusions to cuckoldism.

Page 14, line 10. Enter Mistresse Quickly.] This stage direction ought properly to be placed a little lower.

Page 14, line 11. How now man.] The folio of 1623 reads, "How now, Meg?"

Page 15, line 8. Ramping.] The folio of 1623 reads "rauting."

Page 15, line 17. Caelira Iustice.] This cant term occurs in "The Stately Moral of Three Ladies of London," 1590:

"Then know, Castilian *cavaleros*, this."

There is also a book printed in 1599, called, "A Countercuffe given to Martin Junior, by the venturous, hardie, and renowned Pasquil of Englande, *Cavaliero*." (Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 68.)

Page 15, lines 23, 24. My merrie host hath had the measuring of their weapons.] Alluding to the custom in trials allowed by law, where search used to be made by the attending knights, before the combat, of the equality of their weapons; which were at the defendant's election, provided he confined his choice between ancient, usual and military. See Dr. Grey's Notes on Shakespeare, 8vo. 1754, vol. i., p. 100-1.

Page 15, line 28. My guest, my cauellira.] The folio of 1623 reads, "my guest cavalier."

Page 15, line 30. Rrooke.] A misprint for *Brooke*. In the folio edition, Ford's assumed name is altered to *Broom*. Theobald says that we need no better evidence in favour of the reading of the quartos than the pun that Falstaff makes on the name, when Brook sends him some burnt sack; but it may be objected that this pun is almost entirely lost in the early edition. In favour of the adopted reading in the amended play, the following lines may be adduced, which appear to be intended to rhyme—

"Nay, I'll to him again in name of Brome :
He'll tell me all his purpose : Sure, he'll come."

These lines do not occur in the sketch of the play.

Page 15, line 31. My.] The 4to of 1619 reads "thy," which is probably the right reading. The folio of 1623 preserves the original text.

Page 16, line 10. I have seen the day.] This and the two following speeches are closely followed in the amended play. Mr. Knight is in error when he says the Host of the Garter's question "Shall we wag," in the quarto, corresponds to the disputed passage "Will you go on, beers?" in the amended play; and although Mr. Knight's mistake was pointed out in the *Athenæum*, yet it remains uncorrected in the new edition. See Mr. Knight's Library Edition of Shakespeare, vol. iii., p. 52.

Page 16, line 30. I will retort the sum in equipage.] This line is omitted in the folio edition of the amended play, although inserted in some modern editions from the early quartos.

Page 17, line 2. Your.] For "you are." This mode of writing is frequently repeated in the course of the play.

Page 17, line 2. Tall fellowes.] Bold, courageous persons.

Page 17, line 3. The handle of her fan.] See the long note on the value of fans in Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 74, 75.

Page 17, line 4. Ho-] The commencement of this word in the original is at the end of the line, and the conclusion of it left out by accident. In the 4to of 1619 this omission is supplied by the word "honesty," which is probably a guess of the person under whose superintendence the second edition of this sketch was printed, for in the same passage which is preserved in the amended play we find "honour" substituted, which is more congenial to the context, and was doubtlessly the original word.

Page 17, line 10. I.] A mistake for "a."

Page 17, line 10. Throng.] Dennis reads "thong," but see Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 76.

Page 17, line 10. To your manner of pickt hatch.] A low neighbour-

hood in the East of London. "I proceeded toward Pickt-hatch, intending to beginne their first, which, as I may fitly name it, is the very skirts of all brothel-houses."—*The Black Booke, by T. M.*, 4to. Lond. 1604, p. 1.

Page 17, line 15. God.] This is altered to "Heaven" in the amended play; and also at line 30, in the same page.

Page 18, lines 7, 8. You meet her between eight and nine.] In the amended play, the hours for the two appointments of Falstaff with Mistress Ford are transposed.

Page 19, line 2. He hath sent you a cup of sacke.] It seems to have been a common custom at taverns, in our author's time, to send presents of wine from one room to another, either as a memorial of friendship, or, as in the present instance, by way of introduction to acquaintance. According to Reed, this practice was continued as late as the Restoration, who quotes the following passage from Dr. Price's *Life of General Monk*—"I came to the Three Tuns before Guildhall, where the general had quartered two nights before. I entered the tavern with a servant and portmanteau, and asked for a room, which I had scarce got into but wine followed me as a present from some citizens, desiring leave to drink their morning's draught with me."

Page 20, line 2. Nay beleeeue it.] The edition of 1619 reads, "Nay, I beleeeue it."

Page 20, line 2. Time.] A mistake in both copies for "true."

Page 20, line 19. Veruensie.] That is, "vehemeny."

Page 20, line 29. And.] The edition of 1619 reads, "if," and the same correction has been made in other places, showing a change in the language in *seventeen* years only.

Page 20, line 31. M. Brooke.] This is omitted in the folio of 1623.

Page 21, line 12. Randeuowes.] The amended play reads "harvest-home."

Page 21, line 13. Very.] This word is omitted in the edition of 1619.

Page 21, line 28. Aquavita bottle.] Heywood, in his "Challenge for Beauty," 1636, mentions the love of *aqua-vitæ* as characteristic of the Irish:—

"The Briton he metheglin quaffs,
The Irish *aqua-vitæ*."

The Irish *aqua-vitæ*, says Malone, was not brandy, but *usquebaugh*, for which Ireland has been long celebrated.

Page 22, line 8. Hearing.] "Herring," 4to. of 1619.

Page 22, line 15. Foine.] The ancient term for making a thrust in fencing or tilting.

Page 22, line 17. Stock.] A corruption of the Italian *stocata*.

Page 22, line 18. The montnce.] This strange corruption and false punctuation is followed in the edition of 1619. The passage must be read thus :—" to see thee pass the punto, the stock, the reverse, the distance, the montant ; is a dead ?"

Page 22, line 19. Esculapis.] That is, *Æsculapius*.

Page 22, line 20. Bullies taile.] See an explanation of this in Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 94.

Page 22, line 23. Castallian.] A cant term, for a long note on which see Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 94, 95.

Page 22, line 29. Bully Justice.] The amended play reads "guest justice?" This fully explains why the merry Host of the Garter is so fond of the word "bully."

Page 22, line 30. Mockwater.] See an explanation of this in Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 96.

Page 22, line 31. Me.] The edition of 1619 rightly reads "be."

Page 23, line 1. Claperclaw.] This word occurs also in "Tom Tyler and his Wife :—" "I would clapper-claw thy bones." I find the word earlier in the curious macaronic poem in MS. Lansd., 762.

Page 23, line 5. And Ile prouoke him.] The remainder of this speech ought to be given to the host, not to the doctor.

Page 23, line 14. My host.] Omitted in the folio of 1623.

Page 23, line 18. Throw cold water on your collar.] Steevens quotes the following passage from Hamlet :—

" Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience."

Page 23, line 20. A feasting.] The edition of 1619 reads "feasting."

Page 23, line 21. And thou shalt wear hir cried game.] This passage is very obscure. In the amended play (fol. 1623, p. 48) we have, "and thou shalt wooe her : Cride-game." Still, this last phrase is unintelligible, and the notes of the Variorum edition do not clear up the matter satisfactorily. Theobald alters it to *try'd game*, but Warburton reads "*cry aim*, said I well?" i. e. consent to it, approve of it. Steevens strongly supports Warburton's emendation.

Page 23, line 21. Bully.] Omitted in the folio of 1623.

Page 24, line 7. There dwelt a man in Babylon.] This is the first line of a ballad which was licensed by T. Colwell, in 1562, under the title of "The goodly and constant wyfe Susanna." It is quoted in "Twelfth Night," act ii. sc. 3. In the amended play, this is altered to a line in the old version of the 137th psalm, which is more in character. We may, perhaps,

hazard a conjecture that it was originally so, and that the line from the popular ballad of Susanna was inserted in its place by mistake, which is not improbable, if the original sketch was edited from dictation.

Page 24, line 8. To shallow rivers, &c.] It is scarcely necessary to observe that this is an extract from the beautiful little ballad, attributed to Marlowe, entitled "The passionate Shepherd to his Love." It is not generally known that Dr. Wilson set it to Music, the original being in the Bodleian library. It was extremely popular in the time of Shakespeare, as may be gathered from the plentiful allusions in contemporary writers. "Doe you take me for a woman, that you come vpon mee with a ballad of Come liue with me and be my Loue."—*Choices Change, and Change, or Conceits in their Colours*, 4to., London, 1606, p. 3.

Page 24, line 13. Cowne.] That is, *gown*.

Page 24, line 25. What is I pray you.] "What is it, I pray you," 4to. of 1619.

Page 25, line 14. For missing your meetings and appointments.] This passage is omitted in the amended play, but they were "recovered" by Pope.

Page 25, line 21. Gawle and Gawlia.] Sir Thomas Hanmer proposes to read "Gallia and Wallia," but, as Dr. Farmer observes, it is objected that *Wallia* is not easily corrupted into *Gaul*. Possibly the word was written "Guallia;" and the present reading appears to confirm this conjecture. See Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii. p. 110.

Page 25, line 30. Giue me thy hand terrestriall, so.] This passage is omitted in the folio of 1623.

Page 26, line 4. Afore God.] The folio of 1623 reads, "trust me."

Page 26, line 31. He smelles all April and May.] The folio of 1623 reads, "he smels April and May." This was the phraseology of the time; not "he smells of April and May." So in *Measure for Measure*:—"he would mouth with a beggar of fifty, though *she smelt brown bread and garlick*." (Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii. page 114.)

Page 26, line 33. Tis in his betmes] A misprint, I suppose, for *buttons*, as in the folio (ed. 1623, p. 49.) The general explanation is, that this is an allusion to the custom of wearing the flower called *bachelor's buttons*. Mr. Knight, however, in his "Library Edition of Shakespeare," vol. iii., p. 74, says that a similar phrase, "It does not lie in your breeches," meaning it is not within your compass: "'tis in his buttons" therefore means—he's the man to do it; his buttons hold the man. This is certainly a much more probable interpretation, and the context appears to me not only to warrant but almost require that explanation.

Page 27, line 10. This and the two following speeches are omitted in the

amended play. See, however, *Malone's Shakespeare*, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 130, and act iii., sc. 4.

Page 27, line 20. I may chance to make him drinke in pipe wine.] "Drink in" is a common phrase of the time. There is, probably, something omitted here, as a pun seems to be intended. See Boswell's *Malone*, vol. viii., p. 116.

Page 27, line 32. Haue I caught my heauenlie Jewel? This is the first line of the second song in Sidney's "*Astrophel and Stella*." (*Malone's Shakespeare*, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 119.)

Page 28, line 4. By the Lord.] The reader will observe with what care the profane passages have been altered in the amended play. We here have, "I'll speak it before the best lord."

Page 28, line 9. The arched bent.] See *Malone's Shakespeare*, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 120.

Page 28, line 14. A traitor.] i. e. to thy own merit.

Page 28, line 18. I cannot cog, I cannot prate.] The second is omitted in the amended play. *Malone* quotes the following from "*Wily Beguil'd*," 1606:—

"I cannot play the dissembler,
And woo my love with courting ambages,
Like one whose love hangs on his smooth tongue's end;
But in a word I tell the sum of my desires,
I love faire Lelia."

Page 28, line 19. Like Bucklers-berie.] Buckler's-bury, in the time of Shakespeare, was chiefly inhabited by druggists, who sold all kinds of herbs, green as well as dry. (*Malone's Shakespeare*, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 123.)

Page 28, line 31. Behind the arras.] The spaces left between the walls and the wooden frames, on which arras was hung, were not more commodious to our ancestors than to the authors of their ancient dramatic pieces. Borachio, in "*Much Ado about nothing*," and Polonius, in "*Hamlet*," also avail themselves of this convenient recess.

Page 29, line 2. His.] "This," 4to. of 1619.

Page 29, line 3. Speak louder.] This is, of course, spoken aside to Mrs. Page, in order that Falstaff, who is retired, may hear. This passage is omitted in the amended play, and yet it greatly heightens the effect of the scene.

Page 29, line 16. Aside.] This stage direction is omitted in the second edition, but appears necessary to the sense.

Page 29, line 18. And none but thee.] This passage is omitted in the

amended play, but Malone says it deserves to be restored. Falstaff has, however, used the same words before to Mrs. Ford. See p. 28, line 20, 21.

Page 30, line 4. Dishonest slaue.] The folio of 1623 reads "dishonest rascal."

Page 30, line 11. We should leaue him.] The word "so" must be added at the end of this sentence, for the sake of the rhyme.

Page 30, line 12. What wives may be merry, and yet honest too.] The following song, written at the close of the seventeenth century, is taken from a MS. in my possession, and is curious as showing the popularity of this play:—

"We merry wives of Windsor,
Whereof you make your play;
And act us on your stages,
In London day by day:
Alass it doth not hurt us,
We care not what you do;
For all you scoff, we'll sing and laugh,
And yet be honest too.

Alass we are good fellows,
We hate dishonesty;
We are not like your city dames,
In sport of venery:
We scorn to punk, or to be drunk,
But this we dare to do;
To sit and chat, laugh and be fat,
But yet be honest too.

But should you know we Windsor dames,
Are free from haughty pride;
And hate the tricks you wenches have,
In London and Bankside:
But we can spend, and money lend,
And more than that we'll do;
We'll sit and chat, laugh and be fat,
And yet be honest too.

It grieves us much to see your wants,
Of things that we have store;
In Forests wide and Parks beside,
And other places more:

Pray do not scorn the Windsor horn,
That is both fair and new,
Altho' you scold, we'll sing and laugh,
And yet be honest too.

And now farewell unto you all,
We have no more to say :
Be sure you imitate us right,
In acting of your play :
If that you miss, we'll at you hiss,
As others us'd to do ;
And at you scoff, and sing, and laugh,
And yet be honest too."

Page 30, line 22. Or the cuberts, &c.] The folio of 1623 reads, "and in the chambers, and in the coffers, and in the presses, heaven forgive me my sins at the day of judgment!"

Page 30, line 27. Without cause.] The edition of 1619 reads "without a cause."

Page 31, line 12. Enter Sir John Falstaffe.] The edition of 1619 adds "and Bardolfe" to this stage direction.

Page 31, line 24. A blind bitches puppies.] So read the folios as well as the quartos, though modern editors have changed the position of the adjective, and read "a bitch's blind puppies." There is, however, no great improbability in the supposition that the mistake was intentional on the part of the author, and, in Falstaff's state of excitement, perhaps intended to raise merriment in the audience. On reading this speech, as here given, the reader cannot fail to be struck with the superior effect of it in the amended play; and the addition of "fifteen" after the above passage, simple as such a change might appear, wonderfully heightens the effect of the whole.

Page 31, line 31. Money.] Read "mummy."

Page 32, line 7. I haue bene.] The folio of 1623 reads "I was."

Page 32, line 8. She hath tickled mee.] This is omitted in the folio of 1623.

Page 32, line 18. And then thinke of me.] The folio of 1623 reads, "and then judge of my merit."

Page 32, line 31. How.] Omitted in the folio of 1623.

Page 33, line 7. Euen so, plainly so.] Omitted in the folio of 1623.

Page 33, line 11. God.] The folio of 1623 reads, "good luck."

Page 33, line 12. Me.] A mistake for "in."

Page 33, line 17. By the Lord.] The editors of the first folio, as in numerous other instances, have altered this to "yes," to avoid the penalty of the statute of King James I. I quite agree with Mr. Collier in his *principle* of restoring the original exclamations in such cases, wherever practicable; for often, as in this instance, they heighten most considerably the general effect.

Page 33, line 35. Ere I thus leaue her.] The edition of 1619 reads "Ere thus I leaue her."

Page 34, line 4. Adresse.] i. e. make ready.

Page 34, line 10. Is this a dreame?] Part of this speecn is transposed in the amended play.

Page 36, line 21. Specially.] The folio reads "speciously."

Page 37, line 29. My maids aunt, Gillian of Brainford.] In the amended play we have "the fat woman of Brentford" substituted for a person who was rather celebrated in the popular literature of the latter half of the sixteenth century. "Jyl of Brentford's Testament" was in Captain Coxe's library, and two copies, I believe, and no more, have descended to modern times—one in the Bodleian Library, and another which passed through the hands of Ritson and Heber. Dame Gillian's legacies, although dispensed with the utmost liberality, and in some respects with judgment, were not, however, very acceptable. According to the black-letter tract, she was hostess of a respectable inn at Brentford, and, therefore, we may presume, suitable company for Mistress Ford:—

"At Brentford on the west of London,
Nyth to a place that called is Syon,
There dwelt a widow of a homly sort,
Honest in substaunce and full of sport:
Dally she coud with pastim and jestes,
Among her neyghbours and her gestes;
She kept an inne of ryght good lodgyng,
For all estates that thyder was comyng."

This is on the supposition that Robert Copland, the writer of this tract, did not invent the circumstances. The joke of Gillian's legacy continued to a late period, for I find it alluded to in "Harry White his humour," 12mo. Lond. [1660]:—

"The author in a recompence,
To them that angry be,
Bequeaths a gift that's cald
Old Gillian's legacie."

Master Ford may, however, have been correct in his appreciation of the

old lady's character; for that one Dame Gillian was a witch appears from the following incantation, which has been kindly communicated to me by my friend Mr. Wright, from a manuscript, in private hands, of the time of Charles I. :—

The Conjuring of the Witch.

“ Come away, come away,
 Thou Lady gay!
 Harke how shee stumbles!
 Harke how she mumbles!
 Dame Gillian, Dame Gillian,
 Why when? Why when?
 By old clarett I thus enlarge thee,
 By canary I thus charge thee!
 By brittaine, water, glim and peter,
 Appeare and answere me in meter.
 By the poxe in thy nose,
 And the gout in thy toes,
 By thy old dry skin,
 And thy mumble within,
 By thy little little ruffe,
 And thy hood that's made of stuffe,
 By the bottle at thy breech,
 And thy old salt itch,
 Appeare!
 I come! I come!”

Page 38, line 16. You.] Omitted in folio of 1623.

Page 38, line 23. Pethlem.] Sir Hugh's pronunciation for “Bedlem.”

Page 38, line 31. A witch, &c.] This speech ought to be given to Ford, and not as a continuation of Mrs. Ford's explanation. The mistake is corrected in the second quarto.

Page 39, line 7. A great beard.] A beard was one of the marks of a supposed witch. See also “Macbeth,” act i., sc. 3.

Page 39, line 29. Come off.] i. e. pay.

Page 40, line 1. Hnue.] A mistake for “haue.”

Page 40, line 22. Walkes in shape of a great stagge.] We have here no mention of the oak, which forms so prominent a feature in the legend as related in the amended play. On a question which has arisen relative to the position and existence of this tree, some very interesting papers have appeared in the “Gentleman's Magazine,” written by Dr. Bromet. This gentleman refers to Norden's map, dated 1607, preserved in MS. Harl.

3749, but has apparently overlooked one point in connexion with the assistance it affords in discovering the *loci* of Shakespeare's plot. It will be remembered that Mrs. Page says that the fairies were to rush "from forth a saw-pit," and that Page, Shallow, and Slender, must "couch in the castle-ditch, till they see the light of our fairies." This passage affords a strong presumption that the saw-pit was near the castle-ditch, and that Herne's oak was not far removed from either, else why should they have considered it necessary to take these precautionary measures? It would be difficult to compare the maps of Collier and Norden with great accuracy, but I think there is little doubt that the "garden-plott graunted by patent," delineated by Norden, corresponds to the "King's Garden" in Collier's map. Now between this "garden plott" and the castle-ditch, we find in Norden's map *a timber yard and a bridge*. The existence of a timber-yard affords grounds for believing that there may have been a saw-pit somewhere near; and Stowe, speaking of the Park walk, informs us that "at the end of this walke or baye is *a bridge and a dry dytche under the same, as parcell of the castell dyche*, wherby the sayd parke is severyd from the aforesayd walke and castell."—MS. Harl. 367, fol. 13. At this spot, therefore, it is probable that, in Shakespeare's time, there was a saw-pit for the fairies to "rush from," and it is certain that there was a dry ditch close by, and forming a part of the castle-ditch, where Page and his companions may have concealed themselves. If Shakespeare was well acquainted with Windsor Little Park, and the probabilities are in favour of this supposition, this may have been the spot alluded to by him, yet it is very possible that the coincidences above-mentioned may have been quite accidental.

The following decisive evidence that the tree was destroyed is extracted from a contemporary newspaper, communicated to me by Mr. Wright:—

Upon Herne's Oak being cut down, in the spring of 1796.

Within this dell, for many an age,
 Herne's oak uprear'd its antique head:—
 Oh! most unhallow'd was the rage
 Which tore it from its native bed!

The storm that stript the forest bare
 Would yet refrain this tree to wrong,
 And Time himself appear'd to spare
 A fragment he had known so long.

'Twas marked with popular regard,
 When fam'd Elizabeth was queen ;
 And Shakespeare, England's matchless bard,
 Made it the subject of a scene.

So honour'd, when in verdure drest,
 To me the wither'd trunk was dear ;
 As, when the warrior is at rest,
 His trophied armour men revere.

That nightly Herne walk'd round this oak,
 " The superstitious eld receiv'd ;"
 And what they of his outrage spoke,
 The rising age in fear believ'd.

The hunter, in his morning range,
 Would not the tree with lightness view ;
 To him, Herne's legend, passing strange,
 In spite of scoffers, still seem'd true.

Oh, where were all the fairy crew
 Who revels kept in days remote,
 That round the oak no spell they drew,
 Before the axe its fibres smote ?

Could wishes but ensure the power,
 The tree again its head should rear ;
 Shrubs fence it with a fadeless bower,
 And these inscriptive lines appear :—

" Here, as wild Avon's poet stray'd"—
 Hold!—let me check this feeble strain—
 The spot by Shakespeare sacred made,
 A verse like mine would but profane !

See, however, what Pye says in his " Comments on the Commentators on Shakespeare," 8vo. Lond. 1807, p. 13-14—" The tree which the keepers show as Herne's oak is also in the little park, not much more than a hundred yards from the castle ditch, and in the middle of a row of elms, obviously above a century its juniors ; it is in a state of decay, and might well have been an old tree in the time of Shakespeare. I do not affirm this is

the tree, but the other could *not* be the tree; for Page proposes to couch in the castle ditch, till they see the light of the fairies; and that this was not far from the tree appears from their laying hold of Falstaff as soon as he rises from the ground." This second tree is the one mentioned by Steevens.

Page 40, line 26. With huge horns.] Can a pun be intended here on the name of Horne?

Page 41, line 11. And be like.] The edition of 1619 reads, "and will be like."

Page 41, line 29. Antripophgian.] i. e. a cannibal. Cf. Othello, act i. sc. 3. Steevens says "it is here used as a sounding word to astonish Simple."

Page 42, line 3. Now mine host.] The edition of 1619 here supplies the stage direction "He speakes above."

Page 42, line 12. Musselshell.] He calls poor Simple *muscle-shell*, observes Dr. Johnson, because he stands with his mouth open.

Page 42, line 22. I tike.] The folio of 1623 reads "Sir Tike."

Page 42, line 24. God be with you, sir.] The edition of 1619 supplies the stage direction of "Exit."

Page 43, line 10. Host.] "Hosts," 4to. of 1619.

Page 43, line 28. Primero.] A game at cards, fashionable in Shakespeare's time. See Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 171.

Page 43, line 29. To say my prayers.] This is one of the few instances where the folio can be amended by the quarto. This sentence is unaccountably omitted in the amended play, though quite necessary for the complete sense of the passage.

Page 45, line 8. Matrimonie.] The folio of 1623 reads "ceremony."

Page 46, line 15. Puck.] Robin Goodfellow, who is so prominently introduced in the "Midsummer Night's Dream." Pean, mentioned in the next line, is the name of another fairy.

Page 46, line 33. For "*Hir. Sir Hu.*," read "*Sir Hu.*"

Page 46, line 33. Middle-earth.] An ancient term for "the world." A "man of middle-earth" merely means "a mortal." It is an Anglo-Saxon word.

Page 47, line 25. First pinch him well.] The common punishment given by the fairies to those who violated the laws of chastity. So in the "Faithful Shepherdess"—

"Then must I watch, if any be
Forcing of a chastity:
If I find it, then in hast
Give my wreathed horne a blast,

And the fairies all will run,
Wildly dancing by the moon,
And will pinch him to the bone,
Till his lustful thoughts be gone."

Page 49, line 1. Ridden.] The 4to. of 1619 by some mistake reads "written."

Page 50, line 3. This mode of signals is alluded to in "Hudibras."

Page 50, line 26. Your wife is wel pleased.] The word "wel" is omitted in the quarto edition of 1619.

Page 50, line 33. I will also &c.] This line is omitted in the folio of 1623, although restored by Pope and subsequent editors.

Page 51, line 5. Now shal you keep your word.] "Now you sna lkeep your word," edition of 1619.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

[From "Le tredici piacevoli notti del s. Gio. Francesco Straparola," 8vo. Vineg., 1569, vol. i., fol. 47. The points of resemblance in this tale with the plot of the "Merry Wives of Windsor" are not many, chiefly consisting in the plurality of loves, and the ladies communicating to each other the addresses of the same gallant.]

Io non avrei mai creduto valorose donne, ne pur imaginato, che la Signora mi havesse dato carico di dover favoleggiare, e massimamente toccando la volta alla Sig. Fiordiana avenutale per sorte. Ma poscia che a sua altezza così piace et è di contentamento di tutti, io mi sforzerò di raccontare cosa che vi sia di sodisfacimento, et se per aventura il mio ragionare (che Iddio non voglia) vi fosse noioso, o che passasse di honestà il termine, mi havereste per iscusato, et incolparete la Signora Fiordiana, la quale di tal cosa n'è stata cagione. In Bologna nobilissima città di Lombardia, madre de' gli studi, et accomodata di tutte le cose, che si convengono, ritrovavasi uno scolare gentil'huomo Cretense, il cui nome era Filenio Sisterna, giovane leggiadro, et amorevole. Avenne, che in Bologna si fece una bella et magnifica festa, alla quale furono invitate molte donne della città, e delle più belle, e vi concorsero molti gentil'huomini Bolognesi, et scolari, tra' quali vi era Filenio. Costui (si come è usanza de' giovani) vagheggiando hora l'una et hora l'altra donna, e tutte molto piacendogli, dispose al tutto carolar con una d'esse. Et accostatosi ad una, che Emerentiana si chiamava, moglie di Messer Lamberto Bentivogli; la chiese

in ballo. Et ella ch'era gentile, e non men ardita, che bella, non lo rifiutò. Filenio adunque con lento passo menando, et alle volte stringendole la mano con bassa voce, così le disse. Valorosa donna tanta è la bellezza vostra che senza alcun fallo quella trapassa ogni altra, ch'io vedessi giamai. Et non vi è donna à cui cotanto amore io porti, quanto alla vostra altezza, la quale se mi corrisponderà nell'amore, terrommi il piu contento, et il piu felice huomo, che si truovi al mondo, ma altrimenti facendo, tosto vedrammi di vita privo, et ella ne sarà stata della mia morte cagione. Amandovi io adunque Signora mia com'io fo, et è il debito mio, voi mi prendete per vostro servo, disponendo et di me, et delle cose mie (quantunque picciole sieno) come delle vostre proprie, e gratia maggiore dal cielo ricevere non potrei, che di venir soggetto a tanta donna, laquale come uccello mi ha preso nell'amorosa pania. Emerentiana, che attentamente ascoltate aveva le dolci, e gratiose parole, come persona prudente finse di non aver orecchie, et nulla rispose. Finito il ballo, et andatasi Emerentiana à sedere, il giovane Filenio prese un'altra matrona per mano, et con essa lei cominciò à ballare, nè appena egli aveva principata la danza, che con lei si mise in tal maniera a parlare. Certo non fa mestieri gentilissima madonna, che io con parole vi dimostri, quanto, e quale sia il fervido amore, ch'io vi porto, et porterò, fin che questo spirito vitale reggerà queste deboli membra, et infelici ossa. Et felice, anzi beato mi terrei allora, quando io vi avessi per mia patrona, anzi singolar Signora. Amandovi adunque io, sì come io vi amo, et essendo io vostro sì come voi agevolmente potete intendere, non harrete a sdegno di ricevermi per vostro humilissimo servitore, perciò che ogni mio bene, et ogni mia vita da voi, e non altronde dipende. La giovane donna, che Panthemia si chiamava, quantunque intendesse il tutto, non però li rispose, ma la danza honestamente seguì, e finito il ballo sorridendo alquanto si pose con le altere a sedere. Non stette molto, che l'innamorato Filenio prese la terza per mano, la piu gentile, la piu aggratiata, et la

piu bella donna, che in Bologna allora si trovasse, et con esso lei cominciò menare una danza, facendosi far calle a coloro che s'appressavano per rimirarla, et innanzi che si terminasse il ballo, egli le disse tai parole. Honestissima madonna, forse io parerò non poco presuntuoso, scoprendovi hora il celato amore, ch'io vi portai, et hora porto; ma non incolpate me, ma la vostra bellezza, laquale à ciascuna altra vi fa superiore, et me come vostro mancipio tiene. Taccio hora i vostri laudevoli costumi, taccio le egregie, et ammirabili vostre virtù, le quali sono tali, e tante, c'hanno forza di far discender giù da l'alto cielo i superni Dei. Se adunque la vostra bellezza accolta per natura, et non per arte aggradisce à gl'immortali Dei, non è maraviglia, se quella mi stringe ad amarvi, e tenervi chiusa nelle viscere del mio cuore. Pregovi adunque, gentil Signora mia, unico refrigerio della mia vita, c'abbiate caro colui, che per voi mille volte al giorno muore. Il che facendo, io reputerò aver la vita per voi, alla cui gratia mi raccomando. La bella donna, che Sinfrosia s'appellava, havendo intese le care, e dolci parole, che dal focoso cuore di Filenio uscivano, non puote alcun sospiretto nascondere, ma pur considerando l'honor suo, et che era maritata, niuna risposta li diede, ma finito il ballo, se n'andò al suo luogo a sedere. Essendo tutte tre una appresso l'altra quasi in cerchio a sedere, et intertenendosi in piacevoli ragionamenti, Emerentiana moglie di messer Lamberto non già a fine di male, ma burlando disse alle due compagne. Donne mie care, non vi ho io da raccontare una piacevolezza, che mi è avvenuta hoggi? Et che? dissero le compagne. Io (disse Emerentiana) mi ho trovato carolando un'innamorato, il piu bello, il piu leggiadro, et il piu gentile, che si possa trovare. Ilquale disse esser si acceso di me per la mia bellezza, che ne giorno, ne notte non trova riposo, e puntalmente le raccontò tutto ciò, ch'egli aveva detto. Ilche intendendo Panthemia, e Sinforosia, dissero quel medesimo essere avvenuto a loro, et dalla festa non si partirono, che agevolmente conobbero un'istesso esser stato colui, che

con tutte tre haveva fatto l'amore. Il perche chiaramente compresero, che quelle parole dell'innamorato non da fede amorosa, ma da folle, e fittitio amore procedavano, et a sue parole prestarono quella credenza, che prestare si suole a'sogni de gl'infermi, o a fola di romanzi. Et indi non si partirono, che tutte tre concordi si dierono la fede di operare sì, che ciascheduna di loro da per se li farebbe una beffa, et di tal sorte, che l'innamorato si ricorderebbe sempre, che anche le donne sanno beffare. Continovando Filenio in far l'amore quando con una, quando con l'altra, et vedendo, che ciascheduna di loro faceva sembante di volerli bene, si mise in cuore (se possibile era) di ottenere da ciascheduna di loro l'ultimo frutto d'amore, ma non li venne fatto, si come egli bramava, et era il desiderio suo, percioche fu perturbato ogni suo disegno. Emerentiana, che non poteva soffrire il fittitio amore del sciocco scolare, chiamò una sua fanticella assai piacevoletta, et bella, et le impose, ch'ella dovesse con bel modo parlare con Filenio, e isponerli l'amore, che sua madonna li portava, e quando li fusse a piacere, ella una notte vorrebbe esser con esso lui in la propria casa. Ilche intendendo Filenio s'allegro, et disse alla fante, vâ, e ritorna a casa, e raccomandami a tua madonna, et dille da parte mia, che questa sera la mi aspetti, già che'l marito suo non alberga in casa. In questo mezzo Emerentiana fece raccogliere molti fascioli di pungenti spine, e poseli sotto la lettiera, dove la notte giaceva, et stette ad aspettare, che lo amante venisse. Venuta la notte Filenio prese la spada, e soletto se n'andò alla casa della sua nemica, et datole il segno, fu tostamente aperto. E dopò, c'ebbero insieme ragionato alquanto, e lautamente cenato ambe duo andarono in camera per riposare. Filenio appena si haveva spogliato per girsene al letto, che sopraggiunse messer Lamberto suo marito. Il che intendendo la donna, finse di smarrirsi; et non sapendo dove l'amante nascondere, gli ordinò, che sotto il letto se n'andasse. Filenio veggendo il pericolo suo, et della donna, senza mettersi alcun vestimento in dosso, ma solo con la camiscia corse sotto

la lettiera, et così fieramente si ponse, che non era parte veruna del suo corpo, cominciando dal capo sino a' piedi, che non gettasse sangue. Et quanto più egli in quel scuro voleva difendersi dalle spine, tanto maggiormente si pungeva, et non ardiva gridare, accioche messer Lamberto non l'udisse, et uccidesse. Io lascio considerar a voi, a che termine quella notte si ritrovasse il miserello, il quale poco mancò, che senza coda non restasse, sì come era rimasto senza favella. Venuto il giorno, et partitosi il marito di casa, il povero scolare meglio ch'egli puote si rivestì, e così sanguinoso a casa se ne tornò, et stette con un picciolo spavento di morte. Ma curato diligentemente dal medico si riebbe, et ricuperò la pristina salute. Non passarono molti giorni, che Filenio seguì il suo innamoramento, facendo l'amore con l'altre due, cioè con Panthemia, e Sinfrosia, e tanto fece, che hebbe agio di parlare una sera con Panthemia, alla quale raccontò i suoi lunghi affanni, et continovi tormenti, et pregolla, che di lui pietà haver dovesse. L'astuta Panthemia, fingendo averli compassione, si iscusava di non aver il modo di poterlo accontentare, ma pur al fine vinta da suoi dolci preghi, et cocenti sospiri lo introdusse in casa. Essendo già spogliato per andarsene a letto con esso lei, Panthemia li comandò, che andasse nel camerino ivi vicino, ove ella teneva le sue acque nanfe, et profumate, e che prima molto bene si profumasse, et poi se n'andasse al letto. Il scolare non s'avedendo dell'astutia della malvagia donna, entrò nel camerino, et posto il piede sopra una tavola diffitta dal travicello, che la sosteneva, senza potersi ritenere insieme con la tavola cadde giù in un magazzino terreno, nel quale alcuni mercatanti tenevano bambagia, et lane. Et quantunque da alto cadesse, niuno però male si fece nella caduta. Ritrovandosi adunque il scolare in quello oscuro luogo, cominciò a brancolare, se scala, o uscio trovasse, ma nulla trovando, malediceva l'hora e'l punto, che Panthemia conosciuta havea. Venuta l'aurora, et tardi accortosi il miserello dell'inganno della donna, vide in una parte del magazzino certe fisure nelle mura, che alquanto

rendevano di luce, et per essere antiche, et gramose dī fastidiosa muffa, egli cominciò con maravigliosa forza cavar le pietre, ove men forti parevano, e tanto cavò, ch'egli fece un pertugio sì grande, che per quello fuori se ne uscì. Et trovandosi una calle non molto lontana dalla publica strada, così et scalzo, et in camiscia prese il camino verso il suo albergo, et senza esser da alcuno conosciuto, entrò in casa. Sinforosia, che già havea intesa l'una, et l'altra beffa fatta a Filenio, s'ingegnò di farli la terza, non minore delle due. E cominciollo con la coda dell'occhio, quand'ella lo vedeva guatare, dimostrandoli ch'ella si consumava per lui. Lo scolare, già dimenticato delle passate ingiurie, cominciò a passeggiare dinanzi la casa di costei, facendo il passionato. Sinforosia avedendosi lui esser già del suo amore oltre misura acceso, li mandò per una vecchiarella una lettere, per laquale li dimostrò, ch'egli con la sua bellezza, e gentil costumi l'avea sì fieramente presa, e legata, ch'ella non trovava riposo ne dì, ne notte, e perciò, quando a lui fusse a grado, ella desiderava più che ogni altra cosa, di poter con esso lui favellare. Filenio presa la lettera, et inteso il tenore, et non considerato l'inganno, et dismenticati delle passate ingiurie fu il più lieto et consolato huomo che mai si trovasse. Et presa la carta et la penna le rispose che se ella lo amava e sentiva per lui tormento, che egli il medesimo sentiva e che di gran lunga amava più lei che ella lui et ad ogni hora che à lei paresse egli era a suoi servigi e comande. Letta la risposta e trovata la opportunità del tempo, Sinforosia lo fece venir in casa e dopo molti finti sospiri li disse. Filenio mio non so qual altro che tu mi havessi mai condotta à questo passo, al quale condotta mi hai. Imperciò che la tua bellezza, la tua leggiadria, et il tuo parlare mi ha posto tal fuoco nell'anima che come secco legno mi sento abbruciare. Ilche sentendo lo scolare teneva per certo ch'ella tutta si struggesse per suo amore. Dimorando adunque il cattivello con Sinforosia in dolci e dilettevoli ragionamenti e parendogli homai l'hora di andarsene al letto, e coricarsi a lato

a lei disse Sinforosia. Anima mia innanzi che noi andiamo a letto mi pare convenevole cosa che noi ci riconfortiamo alquanto, e presolo per la mano lo condusse in un camerino ivi vicino dove era una tavola apparecchiata con preciosi confetti, et ottimi vini. Havea la sagace donna alloppiato il vino per far che egli si addormentasse sin'à certo tempo. Filenio prese il bicchiere, et lo empì di quel vino, et non avedendosi dell'inganno, intieramente lo bevè. Restaurati li spiriti, e bagnatosi con acqua nanfa, e ben profumatosi, se n'andò a letto. Non stette guari che'l liquore operò la sua virtù e il giovane sì profondamente s'addormentò che'l grave tuono dell'artiglierie malagevolmente destato l'havrebbe. La onde Sinforosia vedendo ch'egli dirottamente dormiva, e il liquore la sua operazione ottimamente dimostrava, si parti e chiamò una sua fante giovane, et gagliarda che del fatto era consapevole et amendue per le mani e per li piedi presero lo scolare e chetamente aperto l'uscio lo misero sopra la strada tanto lungi di casa quanto sarebbe un buon tratto di pietra. Era cerca un hora innanzi che spuntasse l'aurora quando il liquore perdè la sua virtù e il miserello si destò et credendo egli esser à lato di Sinforosia si trovò scalzo e in camiscia mezo morto di freddo giacere sopra la nuda terra. Il poverello quasi perduto delle braccia e delle gambe appena si puote levare in piedi ma pur con gran malagevolezza levatosi et non potendo quasi affermarsi in piedi meglio ch'egli puote e seppe senza esser da alcun veduto al suo albergo ritornò et alla sua salute provedè. Et se non fusse stata la giovanezza che l'aiutò certamente egli sarebbe rimasto attratto de'nervi. Filenio ritornato sano e nell'esser che era prima chiuse dentro del petto le passate ingiurie e senza mostrarsi crucciato e di portarle odio finse ch'egli era di tutte tre vie più innamorato che prima et quando l'una e quando l'altra vagheggiava. Et elle non avedendosi del mal animo ch'egli aveva contro loro ne prendevano trasullo facendoli quel viso allegro e quella benigna e gratiosa ciera che ad un vero innamorato far si suole. Il giovane

pensò piu volte di giocar di mano e signarle la faccia ma come savio considerò la grandezza delle donne e che vergognosa cosa li sarebbe stata à percuotere tre femminelle et raffrenossi. Pensava adunque e ripensava il giovane qual via in vendicarsi tener dovesse et non sovvenendogliene alcuna molto fra stesso si rammaricava. Avenne dopò molto spatio di tempo, che'l giovane s'imaginò di far cosa che al suo desiderio agevolmente sodisfar potesse, et si come gli venne nell'animo, così la fortuna li fu favorevole. Haveva Filenio in Bologna a pigione un bellissimo palagio, il quale era ornato d'una ampia sala e di polite camere. Egli determino di far una superba e honorata festa et invitare assai donne tra quali vi fussero anco Emerentiana Panthemia e Sinforosia. Fatto l'invito et accettato et venuto il dì dell'honorevol festa tutte tre le donne poco savie senza pensar piu oltre se n'andarono. Essendo la hora di rinfrescar le donne con recenti vini, et preciosi confetti, l'astuto giovane prese le tre innamorate per mano, et con molta piacevolezza le menò in una camera, pregandole che si rinfrescassero alquanto. Venute adunque le pazze e sciocche tre donne in camera, il giovane chiuse l'uscio della camera, e andatosene a loro disse. Hora malvagie femine è venuto'l tempo ch'io mi vendicherò di voi, e farovvi portar la pena dell'ingiuria fattami pel mio grand'amore. Le donne udendo queste parole rimasero piu morte che vive e cominciarono a rammaricarsi d'haver altrui offeso e appresso questo malediceano loro medesime che troppo s'haveano fidate di colui che odiare dovevano. Lo scolare con turbato e minaccievole viso comandò che per quanto cara haveano la vita loro tutte tre ignude si spogliassino. Il che intendendo le ghiottoncelle si guatarono l'una con l'altra e dirottamente cominciarono a piagnere pregandolo non già per lor amore ma per sua cortesia e innata humanità l'honor suo riservato le fusse. Il giovane che dentro tutto godeva in ciò le fu molto cortese non volse però che nel suo conspetto vestite rimasero. Le donne gettatesi a' piedi del scolare con pietose lagrime humilmente lo

pregarono che licenziare le dovesse e che di sì grave scorno non fusse cagione. Ma egli che già fatto havea di diamante il cuore disse questo non esser di biasmo ma di vendetta degno. Spogliatesi adunque le donne, e rimase come nacquero, erano così belle ignude come vestite. Il giovane scolare riguardandole da capo a piedi e vedendole sì belle e sì delicate che la lor bianchezza avanzava la neve, cominciò tra se sentire alquanto compassione, ma nella memoria ritornandoli le ricevute ingiurie, e il pericolo di morte scacciò da se ogni pietà e nel suo fiero e duro proponimento rimase. Appresso questo l'astuto giovane tolse tutte le vestimenta loro, e altre robbe che indosso portate havevano, e in uno camerino ivi vicino le pose e con parole assai spiacevoli le ordinò che tutte tre l'una a lato de l'altra nel letto si coricassero. Le donne tutte sgomentate e tremanti da terrore dissero. O insensate noi che diranno i mariti, che diranno i parenti nostri, come si saprà, che noi siamo quivi state ignude trovate uccise? Meglio sarebbe, che noi fussimo morte in fascie, ch'esser con tal vituperoso scorno manifestate. Lo scolare vedendole coricate l'una appresso l'altra come fanno marito e moglie prese uno lenzuolo bianchissimo ma non molto sottile, accioche non trasparessero le carni, e fussero conosciute e tutte tre coperse da capo a piedi; e uscitosi di camera e chiuso l'uscio trovò li mariti loro che in sala danzavano et finito il ballo menolli nella camera dove le donne in letto giacevano e disseli. Signori miei io vi ho quivi condotti per darvi un poco di solazzo et per mostrarvi la più bella cosa che a tempi vostri vedeste giamai e approssimatosi al letto con un torchietto in mano leggiermente cominciò levar il lenzuolo da piedi, e involupparlo e discoperse le donne sino alle ginocchia e i suoi mariti videro le tondette e bianche gambe con i loro isnelli piedi maravigliosa cosa à riguardare. Indi discopersele sino al petto e mostrolli le candidissime coscie che parean due colonne di puro marmo col ritondo corpo all finissimo alabastro somigliante. Dopò scoprendole più in sù li mostrò il teneretto poco relevato petto con le due popoline

sode delicate e tonde che harebbono constretto il sommo Giove ad abbracciarle et basciarle. Di che i mariti ne prendevano quel trastullo e contento che imaginar si puote. Lascio pensar a voi, à che termine si trovavano le misere et infelici donne quando udivano i mariti suoi prendere di loro trastullo. Elle stavano chete, e non osavano citire accioche conosciute non fussero. I mariti tentavano lo scolare che le discoprisse il volto ma egli piu prudente nel altrui male che nel suo consentire non lo volse. Non contento di questo il giovane prese le vestimenta di tutte tre le donne e mostrolle a i mariti loro. I quali vedendo rimasero con una certa stupefazione che li rodeva il cuore. Dopò con grandissima maraviglia piu intensamente riguardandole dicevano tra se. Non è questo il vestimento ch'io fei alla mia donna? Non è questa la scuffia che io le comprai? Non è questo il pendente che le discende dal collo inanzi il petto? Non sono questi gli analletti che ella portava in dito? Usciti di camera per non turbar la festa non si partirono ma à cena rimasero. Il giovane scolare che gia aveva inteso esser cotta la cena et ogni cosa dal discretissimo siniscalco apparecchiata ordinò che ognuno si ponesse a mensa. E mentre che gli invitati menavano le mascelle lo scolare ritornò nella camera dove le tre donne in letto giacevano e discopertele disse. Buon di madonne havete voi uditi i mariti vostri? Eglino quivi fuori con grandissimo desiderio vi aspettano di vedere, che dimorate? Levatevi su dormiglione non sbadigliate cessate homai di stropicciarvi gli occhi, prendete le vestimenta vostre e senza indugio ponetevele indosso che homai è tempo di gire in sala dove le altre donne vi aspettano. E così le bertecciava e con diletto le teneva à parole. Le sconsolate donne dubitando che'l caso suo havesse qualche crudel fine piangevano et si disperavano della loro salute. Et così angosciate et da dolor trafitte in piedi si levarono piu la morte che altro aspettando, et voltatesi verso lo scolare dissero. Filenio ben ti sei oltre modo di noi vendicato; altro non ci resta, se non, che tu prendi la tua tagliente spada e con quella

tu ne dia la morte la quale noi piu che ogn'altra cosa desideriamo. E se questa gratia tu non ne vuoi fare ti preghiamo almeno isconosciute a casa ne lasci ritornare accioche l'honor nostro salvo rimanga. Parendo a Filenio aver fatto assai prese gli suoi panni, datigli gli ordinò che subito si rivestissero et rivestite che furono per un'uscio secreto fuori di casa le mandò, e così vergognate senza esser d'alcuno conosciute alle loro case ritornarono. Spogliatesi le loro vestimenta che indosso havevano, le posero nelli lor forzieri, et astutamente senza andar à letto si misero a lavorare. Finita la cena i mariti ringraziarono lo scolare del buon accetto che fatto gli haveva e molto piu del piacere che havevano havuto in vedere i delicati corpi che di bellezza avanzavano il sole, e preso da lui commiato si partirono, et a i loro alberghi ritornarono. Ritornati adunque i mariti a casa trovarono le loro mogli che nelle loro camere presso il fuoco sedevano et cucivano. Et per che i panni, l'anella et le gioie da'mariti vedute nella camera di Filenio li davano alquanta sospitione, accioche niuno sospetto li rimanesse ciascuno di loro addimandò la sua donna dove era stata quella sera e dove erano le sue vestimenta. A i quali ciascheduna di loro arditamente rispose che di casa quella notte uscita non era e presa la chiave della cassa dove erano le robbe li mostrò le vestimenta le anella e ciò che i loro mariti fatto gli havevano. Il che vedendo i mariti et non sapendosi che dire rimasero cheti raccontando minutamente alle loro donne tutto quello che gli era quella notte avvenuto. Il che intendendo le mogli, fecero sembante di non saper nulla, e doppo che ebbero alquanto riso si spogliarono e s'andarono à riposare. Non passarono molti giorni che Filenio piu volte per strada s'incontrò nelle sue care madonne e disse. Qual di noi hebbe maggior spavento? qual di noi fu peggio trattato? ma elle tenendo gli occhi chini à terra nulla rispondevano. Et in tal guisa lo scolare meglio, che egli seppe et puote senza battitura alcuna virilmente si vendicò della ricevuta ingiuria.

No II.

[From "Il Pecorone di Ser Giovanni Fiorentino," 4to., Trevig., 1640, fol. 7.

This is the tale translated in "The Fortunate, the Deceived, and the Unfortunate Lovers."]

Finita la novella cominciò Saturnina e disse così. Molto m'è piaciuta questa novella considerando la fermezza colui havendo nelle braccia colei cui egli aveva cotanto tempo desiderata. Che s'io fossi stata in quel caso che fu egli non so ch'io m'avessi fatto. Nondimeno io ti vuo dire una novelletta la quale credo che t'abbia à piacere e dice in questo modo.

Egli hebbe in Roma in casa i Savelli due compagni e consorti l'uno de quali aveva nome Bucciolo e l'altro Pietro Paolo ben nati e assai ricchi dell'havere del mondo : perch'eglino si possero in cuore d'andare a studiare à Bologna ; e l'uno volle apparar legge e l'altro decreto e così presero commiato da parenti loro e vennero à Bologna : et ordinatamente l'uno udì legge et l'altro decreto e così studiarono per ispatio di più tempo. Et, come voi sapete, il decreto e di minor volume che non è la legge però Bucciolo che udiva decreto apparì più tosto che non fe Pietro Paolo : per che essendo licenziato e' prese per partito di ritornarsi a Roma et disse a Pietro Paolo. Fratel mio poi ch'io son licenziato io ho fermo di volermi ritornare à casa. Rispose Pietro Paolo, io ti priego che tu non mi lasci qui ma piacciati d'aspettarmi questo verno e poi à primavera noi ce n'andremo. Tu in questo mezo potrai apparare qualche altra scienza et non perderai tempo. Di che Bucciolo fu contento et promise gli d'aspettarlo. Onde avvenne che Bucciolo per non perder tempo se n'andò al maestro suo et disse, Io mi son deliberato d'aspettare questo mio compagno e parente e però voglio che vi piaccia d'insegnarmi qualche bella scienza in questo tempo. Rispose il maestro ch'era contento e però gli disse Eleggi quale scienza tu vuoi e io te la insegnerò volentieri e Bucciolo disse Maestro mio io vorrei apparare come s'innamora e che modo si tiene. Rispose il maestro

quasi ridendo Questo mi piace e non potresti haver trovato scienza di che io fosse piu contento che di questa. Et però vattene domenica mattina alla chiesa de frati minori quando vi saranno ragunate tutte le donne e porrai mente se ve n'ha nessuna che ti piaccia: e quando l'havrai trovata seguila infino che tu vegga dove ella sta, e poi torna da me e questa sia la prima parte ch'io voglio che tu appari. Partissi Bucciuolo e la domenica mattina vegnente sendo al luogo de frati come il maestro gli haveva detto e dando d'occhio tra quelle donne che ve n'erano assai, videvene una fra l'altre che moltò gli piaceva perche ella era assai bella e vaga. Per che partendosi la donne della chiesa Bucciuolo le tenne dietro e vide e apparò la casa dov'ella stava; onde la donna s'avvide che questo scolare s'era incominciato à innamorare di lei e Bucciuolo ritornò al maestro e disse io ho fatto ciò che voi mi diceste e honne veduta una che molto mi piace. Perche il maestro di questo pigliava grandissimo diletto e quasi uccellava Bucciuolo veggendo la scienza ch'egli voleva apparare gli disse, Fa che tu vi passi ogni dí due o tre volte honestamente e habbia sempre gli occhi con teco e guarda che tu non sia veduto guardare allei ma pigliate con gli occhi quel piacere che tu puoi si ch'ella s'avvegga che tu le voglia bene et poi torna da me. Et questa sia la seconda parte. Bucciuolo si partì dal maestro e cominciò saviamente à passare da casa la donna sì che la donna s'avvide certamente ch'e'vi passava per lei. Ond' ella cominciò à guardar lui talche Bucciuolo la cominciò à inchinare saviamente et ella lui piu e piu volte, da che Bucciuolo s'avvide che la donna l'amava: per la qual cosa il tutto riferì al maestro, e essogli rispose e disse. Questo mi piace e son contento e hai saputo ben fare insino à qui; hor conviene che tu trovi modo di farle parlare à una di queste che vanno vendendo per Bologna veli e borse e altre cose. Et mandale à dire come tu se'suo servidore e che non e persona al mondo à cui tu voglia meglio che allei e che tu faresti volentieri cosa che le piacesse: e udirai com'ella ti dirà. Et poi secondo

ch'ella ti manda rispondendo torna da me e dimmelo : et io ti dirò quel che tu habbia à fare. Bucciuolo subito si partì e trovò una merciaiuola ch'era tutto atta a quello ufficio e si le disse. Io voglio che voi mi facciate un grandissimo servizio et io vi pagherò sì che sarete contenta. Rispose la merciaiuola io farò ciò che voi mi direte però ch'io non ci sono per altro se non per guadagnare. Bucciuolo le donò due fiorini e disse Io voglio che voi andiate hoggi una volta in una via che si chiama la Mascarella ove sta una giovane che si chiama madonna Giovanna alla quale io voglio meglio cheà persona che al mondo sia e voglio che voi me le raccomandiate e che voi le diciate ch'io farei volentieri cosa che le piacesse. E intorno à ciò ditele quelle dolci parole ch'io so le saprete dire : e di questo vi prego quanto io so e posso. Disse la vecchietta, lasciate fare à me ch'io piglierò il tempo. Rispose Bucciuolo, Andate ch'io v'aspetto qui. Et ella subitamente si mosse con un panniere di sue merce e andonne a questa donna e trovolla à sedere in sull'uscio e salutolla e poi le disse Madonna havrei io cosa tra queste mie mercantie che vi piacesse ? prendetene arditamente pur che ve ne piaccia. Et così si pose à sedere con lei e cominciòle à mostrare e veli e borse e cordelle e specchi e altre cose. Perche veduto molte cose, molto le piacque una borsa che v'era : ond'ella disse S'io havess danari io comprerei volentieri questa borsa. Disse la merciaiuola, Madonna e' non vi bisogna guardare à cotesto : prendete se c'è cosa che vi piaccia però ch'egli è pagato ogni cosa. La donna si maravigliò udendo le parole e veggendosi fare tante amorevolezze à costei e disse Madonna mia che volete voi dire ? Che parole son queste ? La vecchietta quasi lagrimando disse, io ve lo dirò. Egli è vero che un giovane che ha nome Bucciuolo mi ci ha mandata ; il quale v'ama e vuolvi meglio che à persona che sia al mondo. Et non è cosa che potesse fare per voi che non facesse ; e dicemi che Dio non gli potrebbe fare maggior gratia che essergli comandato da voi qualche cosa. E in verità e' mi pare ch'e' si consumi tutto ; tant'è la voglia ch'egli

ha di parlarvi ; e forse io non vidi mai il piu da bene giovane di lui. La Donna udendo le parole si fece tutto di color vermiglio e volse a costei e disse se non fosse ch'io vi risguardo per amore dell' honor mio io vi governerei si che trista vi farei. Come non ti vergognitu sozza vecchia di venire à una buona donna a dire queste parole ? che trista ti faccia Dio. E in questa parola la giovane prese la stanza dell'uscio per volerle dare, et disse Se tu ci torni mai piu io governerò sì che tu non sarai mai da vedere. Perche la vecchietta fu presta e subito prese le cose sue spicchia et vennessene con Dio e hebbe una grandissima paura di non provare quella stanga et non si tenne sicura insino ch'ella non guinse à Bucciolo. Come Bucciolo la vide la domandò di novelle e come il fatto stava. Rispose la vecchietta, Sta male per cio ch'io non hebbi mai la maggior paura : e in conclusione ella non ti vuole ne udire ne vedere. Et se non fosse ch'io fui presta à partirmi, io havrei forse provato d'una stanga ch'ella haveva in mano. Quanto per mi io non intendo piu tornarvi ; e anche consiglio te, che non t'impacci piu in questi fatti. Bucciolo rimase tutto sconsolato et subito se n'andò al maestro et disse cio che gli era incontrato. Il maestro lo confortò et disse non temere Bucciolo che l'albero non cade per un colpo. Et però fa che tu vi passi stasera et pon mente che viso ella ti fa et guarda s'ella ti pare corucciata ò nò et tornamelo à dire. Mossesi Bucciolo e andò verso la casa dove stave quella sua donna : la quale quando lo vide venire subitamente chiamò una sua fancuilla et dissele fa che tu vada dietro à quel giovane et digli per mia parte che mi venga stasera à parlare et non falli. Perche la fanticella andò à quello, et disse, Messere dice Madonna Giovanna che voi vegniate stasera infino allei ; però ch'ella vi vuol parlare. Maravigliossi Bucciolo e poi le rispose et disse Dille ch'io vi verrò volentieri : e subito tornò al maestro e disse come il fatto stava. Di che il maestro si maravigliò e in se medesimo hebbe sospetto che quella non fosse la donna sua com'ella era : et disse a Bucciolo Bene andravi tu ? disse Bucciolo sì bene. Rispose

il maestro fa che quando tu vi vai tu faccia la via ritto quinci. Disse Bucciolo sarà fatto; e partissi. Era questa giovane moglie del maestro, et Bucciolo nol sapeva e'l maestro n'haveva già presa gelosia perche egli dormiva il verno alla scuola per leggere la notte à gli scolari, e la donna sua si stava sola ella e la fante. Il maestro disse Io non vorrei che costui avesse apparato alle mie spese et pertanto lo vuo sapere. Perche venendo la sera Bucciolo allui, disse maestro io vo. Disse il maestro Va e sia savio. Soggiunse Bucciolo Lasciate fare à me et partissi dal maestro: et havevasi messo in dosso una buona panciera, et sotto il braccio una giusta spada, e allato un buon coltello; e non andava come ismemorato. Il maestro come Bucciolo fu partito si gli avviò dietro, e di tutto questo Bucciolo non sapeva niente; il quale giugnendo all'uscio della donna come lo toccò la donna si gli aperse e miselo dentro. Quando il maestro s'avvide che questa era la donna sua venne tutto meno e disse or veggo bene che costui ha apparato alle mie spese e si pensò d'ucciderlo e ritornò alla scuola e accattò una spada et un coltello e con molta furia fu tornato à casa con animo di fare villania a Bucciolo: e giunto all'uscio cominciò con molta fretta à bussare. La donna era à sedere al fuoco con Bucciolo e sentendo bussar l'uscio subitamente si pensò che fosse il maestro e prese Bucciolo e nascose lo sotto un monte di panni di bucato, i quali non erano ancora rasciutti e per lo tempo gli haveva rágunati in su una tavola à pie d'una finestra. Poi corse all'uscio e domandò, chi era. Rispose il maestro; Apri che tu lo potrai ben sapere mala femina che tu sei. La donna gli aperse et veggendolo con la spada disse Oime signor mio ch'è questo? disse il maestro Ben lo sai tu, chi tu hai in casa. Disse la donna, Trista me che di tu? sei tu fuori della memoria? cercate ciò che c'è; e se voi ci trovate persona squartatemi. Come comincierei io hora à far quello ch'io non fei mai? guardate signor mio che'l nemico non vi facesse veder cosa che voi perdeste l'anima. Il maestro fece accendere un torchietto e cominciò à cercare nella cella

tra le botti; e poi se ne venne suso, et cercò tutta la camera et sotto il letto et mise la spada per lo saccone tutto forandolo: e brevemente e cercò tutta la camera et non lo seppe trovare. Et la donna sempre gli era allato col lume in mano et spesse volte diceva Maestro mio segnatevi che percerto il nemico di Dio v'ha tentato e havvi mosso à vedere quello che mai non protrebbe essere: che s'io havessi pelo addosso che'l pensasse io m'ucciderei io stessa. Et però vi priego per Dio che voi non vi lasciate tentare. Perche il maestro veggendo ch'e'non v'era e udendo le parole della donna quasi se'l credette; e poco stante egli spense il lume è andossene alla scuola. Onde la donna subito serrò l'uscio e cavò Bucciolo di sotto i pani e accese un gran fuoco e quivi cenarono un grosso e grasso capone e ebbero di parecchi ragioni vino e così cenarono di grandissimo vantaggio. Disse la donna più volte vedi che questo mio marito non ha pensato niente. E dopo molta festa e solazzo la donna lo prese per mano e menollo nella camera e con molta allegrezza s'andarono à letto e in quella notte si diedero quel piacere che l'una parte e l'altra volse rendendo più e più volte l'uno all'altro pace. Et passata la desiata notte venne il giorno: perche Bucciolo si levò et disse Madonna io mi vuo partire: vorrestemi voi comandar niente? disse la donna Sì che tu ci torni stasera. Disse Bucciolo sarà fatto: e preso commiato uscì fuori e andossene alla scuola et disse al maestro Io v'ho da fa ridere. Rispose il maestro, come? Disse Bucciolo Hier sera poi che fui in casa colei et eccoti il marito e cercò tutta la casa et non mi seppe trovare: ella m'haveva nascoso sotto un monte di panni di bucato, i quali non erano anchora rasciutti. Et brevemente la donna seppe si ben dire ch'egli se n'ando fuori: talche noi poi cenammo d'un grosso capone e beemo di fini vini con la maggior festa e allegrezza che voi vedeste mai: et così ci demmo vita et tempo enfino à di. Et perche io ho poco dormito tutta notte mi voglio ire à riposare: perch'io le promisi di ritornarvi stasera. Disse il maestro fa che quando tu vi vai tu mi faccia motto.

Bucciuolo disse Volentieri e poi si partì e'l maestro rimase tutto infiammato che per dolore non trovava luogo e in tutto il dì non potè leggere lettione tanto aveva il cuore afflitto : et pensossi di giugnerlo la sera vegnente e accattò una panciera e una cervelliera. Come tempo fu Bucciuolo non sapendo niente di questo fatto puramente se n'andò al maestro et disse io vò. Disse il maestro va e torna quinci domattina à dirmi come tu havrai fatto. Rispose Bucciuolo il farò e subito s'avviò verso la casa della donna. Il maestro subito tolse l'arme sua e uscì dietro à Bucciuolo quasi presso presso : et pensava di guignerlo sull'uscio. La donna che stava attenta subito gli aperse e miselo dentro et serri l'uscio e'l maestro subito giunse et cominciò a bussare e à fare un gran romore. La donna subitamente spense il lume e mise Bucciuolo dietro à se e aperse l'uscio e abbracciò il marito e con l'altro braccio mise fuori Bucciuolo che'l marito non se n'avvide. Et poi cominciò a gridare, Accor'huomo, accor'huomo che'l maestro è impazzato ; et parte il teneva stretto abbracciato. I vicini sentendo questo romore corsero et veggendo il maestro essere così armato e udendo la donna che diceva Tenetelo ch'egli è impazzato per lo troppo studiare, avisaronsi e se'l credettero ch'e' fosse fuor della memoria : et cominciarongli à dire. Eh maestro che vuol dir questo? andatevi su'l letto a riposare, non v'affaticate piu. Disse il maestro come mi vuo io riposare quando questa mala femina ha uno huomo in casa e io ce lo vide entrare ? disse la donna, Trista la vita mia domandate tutti questi vicini se mai s'avvidero pur d'un mal atto di me. Risposero tutte le donne et gli huomini Maestro non habbate pensiero di cotesto però che mai non nacque la miglior donna di costei ne la piu costumata ne con la miglior fama. Disse il maestro, Come, che io le vidi entrare uno ; e so che c'è entrato. In tanto vennero due fratelli della donne ; per ch'ella subito cominciò a piagnere et disse fratelli miei questo mio marito è impazzato e dice ch'io ho in casa uno huomo e non mi vuole se non morta : e voi sapete bene se io sono stata femina da quelle novelle. I

fratelli dissero. Noi ci maravigliamo come voi chiamate questa nostra sorella mala femina : e che vi move piu hora che l'altre volte essendo stata con voi tanto tempo quanto ell'è ? Disse il maestro Io vi so dire che c'è uno in casa et io l'ho visto. Risposero i fratelli. Or via, cerchiamo se c'è : et se ci ha noi faremo di lei si fatta chiarezza et daremle si fatta punishmente che voi sarete contento. E l'uno di loro chiamò la sorella et disse dimmi il vero hacci tu persona nessuna in casa ? Rispose la donna oime che di tu ? Christo me ne guardi, et diemi prima la morte innanzi ch'io volessi haver pelo che'l pensasse. Oime farei hora quello che non fe mai nessuna di casa nostra ? non ti vergogni tu pure à dirmelo ? Di che il fratello fu molto contento e col maestro insieme cominciarono à cercare. Il maestro se n'andò di subito a questi panini et venne forando contendendo con Bucciuolo ò vero credendo che Bucciuolo vi fosse dentro. Disse la donna. Non vi dico io ch'egli è impazzato à guastare questi panni ? Tu non gli facesti tu. E cosi s'avvidero i fratelli che'l maestro era impazzato : e quando egli ebbero ben cerco cio che v'era non trovando persona disse l'uno dei fratelli. Costui è impazzato : e l'altro disse maestro in buona fe maestro voi fate una grandissima villania à fare questa nostra sorella mala femina. Perche il maestro ch'era infiammato et sapeva quel ch'era cominciò adirarsi forte di parole con costoro et sempre teneva la spada ignuda in mano ; onde costoro presero un buon bastone in mano per uno e bastonarono il maestro di vantaggio in modi che gli ruppero quei due bastoni adosso et lo incatenarono come matto dicendo ch'egli era impazzato per lo troppo studiare et tutta notte lo tennero legato ; et eglino si dormirono con la loro sorella. Et la mattina mandarono per lo medico, il qual gli fece fare un letto à pie del fuoco ; et comandando che non gli lasciassero favellare à persona, e che non gli rispondessero à nulla et che lo tenessero à dieta tanto ch'egli rassottigliasse la memoria ; et cosi fu fatto. La voce andò per Bologna come questo maestro era impazzato e à tutti ne cresceva dicendo l'un con l'altro Per certo io me n'avvide in-

fino hieri percioch'e' non poteva leggere la lettion nostra. Alcuno diceva, Io lo vidi tutto mutare : si che per tutti si diceva ch'egli era impazzato e cosi si ragunarono per andarlo à visitare. Buccioli non sapendo niente di questo venne alla scuola con animo di dire al maestro cio che gli era intervenuto : e giungendo gli fu detto come il maestro era impazzato. Bucciolo se ne maravigliò e increbbegliene assai e con gli altri insieme l'andò à visitare. Et giugnendo alla casa del maestro, Bucciolo si cominciò à fare la maggior maraviglia del mondo e quasi venne meno veggendo il fatto com'egli stava. Ma perche nessuno s'accorgesse di niente, andò dentro con gli altri insieme. Et giugnendo in sulla sala vide il maestro tutto rotto e incatenato giacere su'l letto à piè del fuoco per che tutti gli scolari si condolsero co'l maestro dicendo che del caso increseva loro forte. Onde toccò anche a Bucciolo a fargli motto, et disse, Maestro mio di voi m'incresce quanto di padre e se per me si può far cosa che vi piaccia, fate di me come di figliuolo. Rispose il maestro e disse Bucciolo Bucciolo vatti con Dio che tu hai bene apparato alle mie spese. Disse la donna non date cura a sue parole però che egli vagella et non sa ciò ch'egli stesso si favella. Partissi Bucciolo, e venne a Pietro Paolo, e disse Fratello mio fatti con Dio però ch'io hò tanto apparato che non voglio più apparare, et cosi si parti et tornossi à Roma con buona ventura.

[TRANSLATION.]

When the novel was finished, Saturnina began to speak thus. Much hath this story pleased me, considering his firmness, who had in his arms her whom he had so long desired ; and, had I been in his place, I know not what I should have done. Nevertheless, I will relate to thee a story, which I think must needs please thee ; and she began after this fashion.

There were at Rome in the Casa i Savelli two companions and partners, one named Bucciolo, and the other Pietro Paolo, both of good family, and tolerably rich in the goods of this world. Wherefore they resolved to go to study at Bologna, one of them wishing to learn jurisprudence, and the

other the decretals, and so they took leave of their parents, and came to Bologna ; here they took lessons each in the branch of study which he had chosen, and thus they continued for some time. And, as you know, the decretals are of less volume than the canon law, whereby Bucciuolo, who studied the former, completed his studies more quickly than Pietro Paolo, and so, having received his congé, he purposed to return home, and thus he spoke to Pietro Paolo. My brother, since I have received my leave of departure, I am determined to return home. But Pietro Paolo answered, I pray thee leave me not here, but he pleased to wait for me this winter, and in the spring we will go together. Meanwhile thou wilt be able to learn some other science, and thus thou wilt not lose thy time. With this Bucciuolo was content, and promised to wait for him. Hence it came to pass, that Bucciuolo, not to lose time, went to his master, and said I have resolved to wait for this my companion and relation, and I wish, therefore, that it would please you to teach me some liberal science during this time: His master replied that he was willing to do so, bidding him choose what science he would, and he would teach him willingly. Whereupon Bucciuolo said, Master, I would fain learn how one falls in love, and what order should be taken therefore. The master answered jestingly, I am well pleased with this, nor couldst thou have chosen a subject to content me better. Wherefore go on the Sunday morning to the church of the Minorites when all the ladies are collected there, and there consider whether there is any one who pleases thee ; and, having found such a one, follow her to learn where she lives, and then return to me ; and take this as the first part of thy lesson. So Bucciuolo took his leave, and the next Sunday being where his preceptor had commanded him, and looking among the ladies, of whom there were many there, he saw one among the others who pleased him much, for she was beautiful and charming. Therefore, when she left the church, Bucciuolo kept behind her, and saw and took note of the house in which she dwelt. Hereby the lady saw that he had begun to be in love with her, and he returned to his master, and said, I have done as you bade me, and have seen one among the ladies who pleases me much. Wherefore the master was mightily pleased, and, considering the science which Bucciuolo was desirous of learning, he played with him as a fowler with a bird. And he said to him, contrive to pass before her house two or three times every day, and keep thy eyes open, and watch her, but so that no one may see thee watching, enjoying all that it is possible with thy eyes alone to enjoy, and giving her to understand thy good will towards her, and then return to me ; and let this be the second part of thy lesson. Bucciuolo took leave of his master, and began cautiously to pass backwards and forwards before her house, in such manner that she saw for certain that he did

so for the sake of her. Wherefore she began to look upon him so, that Bucciuolo began discreetly to bow to her, and the lady to him several times, so that he perceived that she began already to be in love with him, and all this he related to his master, who thus replied to him.

This pleases me well, and I am satisfied with thee, and thou hast hitherto performed thy part well. Now must thou find means of bringing to speech of her one of those women who go about Bologna, selling veils and purses, and such like matters. By her send word to the lady that thou art devoted to her, and that there is no one in the world to whom thou dost so wish well, and that thou wouldst willingly do something which should give her pleasure. Thou wilt then hear what she will say to thee; and as she shall answer, return and tell me, and I will tell thee what thou must do further.

Bucciuolo, therefore, departed, and found a pedlar woman, just such a one as his purpose required, and said to her: I wish you to do me a great service, for which I will pay you in such sort that you shall be well pleased. The woman replied, I will do as you require of me: seeing I am here for no other purpose but to make my gain. Bucciuolo gave her two florins, and said to her, I wish you to go to-day to a street called La Mascarella, where lives a young lady, by name Madonna Giovanna, whom I love better than any one else in the world; and to whom I wish that you should commend me, and say to her that I would willingly do somewhat which should be for her pleasure. And say to her on this matter such sweet words as I know you can well say: and for all this I beseech you as much as in me lies. The old woman replied, Leave all to me, for I will find a time for doing all this.

He replied Go, and I will wait for you here. And she forthwith set out with a basket of her wares, and went to this lady, whom she found sitting at her door, and, saluting her, she said to her, My lady, is there any thing among these my wares that would please you; take without doubting whatever you will. And hereupon she sat down beside her, and began to show her veils, and purses, and ribbons, and mirrors, and other things. When she had looked at many things, she was taken with a purse which was there, and she said, if I had the money I would willingly buy this purse. The pedlar woman replied, Madam, there is no need to stand upon that: take what you please, for all is paid for. The lady wondered hearing these words, and seeing herself treated with so much show of good will, and said, What do you mean, madam, and what words are these? The old lady, half crying, said, I will tell you. In very truth, a young gentleman named Bucciuolo has sent me to you, who loves you, and wishes you better than any body in this world; there is nothing that he could do for you which he would not do: and he has told me that no greater happiness could

come to him from God, than that he should have some command from you. And, indeed, it seems to me that he is pining away for the great longing he has to speak to you; a better youth than him I never saw.

The lady grew all crimson as she heard these words, and, turning to the other, she said, Were it not that I look to my own honour, I would so use you that you should repent of this. How is it you are not ashamed, vile old woman, to speak such words to a lady of honour? God give you your deserts therefore. And, so speaking, the young lady took the wooden bar which fastened the door, as if she would beat her with it, and said, If thou ever come hither again, I will so use thee that thou wilt not speedily be seen again. Whereat the old woman hastily took up her goods, and made her escape, mightily afraid of feeling the bar of wood on her shoulders, and thought herself not safe until she arrived at the house of Bucciolo. When he saw her he asked her news, and how the matter stood. She replied, Ill enough, for I never was so afraid in my life. In short, she will neither hear nor see thee; and but that I was quick to escape, I should, doubtless, have felt a stick that she had in her hand. For my own part, I have no will to return thither. And I would counsel thee also to have nothing more to do in this matter.

Bucciolo remained all discouraged at this, and went to his master to tell him what had happened to him. But he comforted him, saying, Take courage, Bucciolo, the tree does not fall for a single stroke. But contrive to pass her house this evening, and mark what countenance she shows thee, and whether she appears angry with thee or not, and return to tell me. So Bucciolo set out again for the house where this his lady was; who, when she saw him coming, suddenly called a serving girl of hers, and said to her, Go after that young gentleman, and tell him on my part to come to speak to me this evening without fail. So the girl came up to him and said, Sir, Madonna Giovanna bids that you come to her this evening, since she would speak with you. The youth was much surprised, but replied to her, saying, Tell her that I will come willingly, and returned immediately to his master to tell him how the case stood. At this the master marvelled, and began to doubt in himself whether this might not be his own wife, as, indeed, it was; and he said to Bucciolo, Wilt thou go thither? Surely, replied the other. The master replied, When thou goest there, go straight hence, to which Bucciolo replied, It shall be so, and set out immediately. Now this young lady was the wife of the master, and Bucciolo did not know it; and her husband had already conceived a jealousy of her, because he was obliged in winter to sleep at the school, that he might lecture at night, and his wife staid alone at home, she and the maid. I would not wish, said the master, that this man should be taught at my expense, but

at least I will know whether it is so. So Bucciolo coming to him in the evening, said to him, Master, I am going, and he replied Go, and be prudent. Trust to me, said his scholar, and departed, having put on a shirt of mail, and with a good sword under his arm, and a knife by his side; and he went, taking good heed how he was going. When he was gone, the master set out after him, but of all this the scholar knew nothing; and, arriving at the house of the lady, he knocked, and was immediately let in. When the master saw that this was indeed his wife, he was ready to swoon with vexation, and said, Now I see that he has been learning at my expense; and he thought to slay him, and returned to the school to put on a sword and a dagger, and returned in great rage to the house with the mind to do Bucciolo a grievous injury: and, when he came to the door, he knocked in great haste. The lady was sitting with Bucciolo by the fire, and, hearing the door so suddenly assaulted, she imagined that it must be her husband, and took and hid her lover under a heap of clothes from the washing, which were not yet fully dry, and had been thrown for a time on a table under a window. Then she ran to the door to ask who was there, to which her husband replied, Open the door, for thou knowest well enough who it is, wretched woman. So she opened to him, and seeing his sword, cried out, O, my lord, what is this? The master replied, Thou very well knowest; who is it thou hast in the house? The lady said, Alas for thee, art thou out of thy mind? search if there is any one here, and if there be any one found here, cut me in pieces: how should I begin to do now what I never did in my life before; take care, my lord, lest the fiend show you somewhat which should drive you from your right mind. The master bade her light a torch, and began to look in the cellar among the barrels; then he came up stairs and looked through all the bedchamber, and under the bed, and put his sword into the mattress, piercing it in all directions. In short, he searched the whole chamber, but could not find what he sought. The lady stood by him all the while with the light in her hand, and said from time to time, Cross yourself, sir, for surely the enemy of God has tempted you, and moved you to see the thing which could never be; for, if I had a hair on my body that could think of such a thing, I would slay myself; and, therefore, I pray you for God's sake resist this temptation. The master seeing that there was no one there, and hearing the lady's words, was in some sort persuaded that she spoke the truth, wherefore he put out the lamp, and went back again to the school. Hereupon the lady quickly locked the door, and took out Bucciolo from his hiding-place, and lighted a great fire, and there they prepared for supper a fine and fat capon, and had wine to match it, and thus they supped splendidly. The lady said several times, Look, this husband of mine has gone, and suspects nothing.

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And after much feasting and merriment, the lady took him by the hand and led him into the chamber.

But the day came; wherefore Bucciolo rose and said, Lady I must go; but have you any commands for me? she answered, Yes, that thou shouldst return this evening. It shall be so, said Bucciolo, and, taking his leave, he went to the school, and said to his master, I have wherewithal to make you laugh. How? said he. Bucciolo replied, Yesterday, when I was in the house of her you wot of, behold you her husband comes and searches all the house and cannot find me, for she had hidden me under a heap of wet clothes from the wash; and, in short, she contrived to deceive him so well, that he went out; and then we supped on a fat capon and the best of wines, and had such feasting as you never saw: and thus we amused ourselves till dawn of day. And as I have slept but little all night, I will go to sleep now; for I promised her to return this evening. The master said, When thou goest, let me know of it. He said, With all my heart, and so went away, and the master remained all inflamed with jealousy, and so troubled that he could not for very grief lecture to his scholars. However, he thought to catch his enemy the coming evening, and provided himself with a shirt of mail and a head-piece. When the time was come, Bucciolo, who knew nothing of all this, went in his simplicity to the master, and said I am going: the other replied Go, and come and tell me to-morrow morning how thou hast sped. Bucciolo replied that he would do so, and straightway set out for the house of the lady. The husband took his arms and followed him, almost at his heels, and thought to catch him at the door, but the lady who was waiting, and saw her lover arrive, opened to him, and locked him in. When the master came he knocked at the door, and made a great noise, and the lady, putting out the light, and, putting Bucciolo behind her, opened the door, and put her arm round her husband, and with the other hand pushed her lover out of the door, without her husband's perceiving it. Then she began to cry Help, help, the master is mad, holding him tightly embraced all the while. The neighbours at this rumour running up, and seeing him thus armed, and hearing the lady cry out that he was mad from overmuch study, imagined that it was as she said, and began to say to him What is this, master? go to bed and to sleep, and do not disturb yourself further. He said How should I go to sleep when this wretched woman has a man in the house, for I saw him go in myself? Alas, said she, ask all these our the neighbours if they ever saw an ill act of mine. All the women and men too answered, Master, think no such thing as this, for there never was born a better woman, nor of more careful conduct, nor of better fame. How, said he, when I saw him go in with my own eyes, and know surely that he is there? Meanwhile came in the lady's two brothers; whereupon she began

incontinent to weep, and said, O my brothers, this husband of mine is mad, and will have it that I have a man in the house, and nothing will satisfy him but that he will kill me, and you know well if I am a woman to do such a thing. The brothers said to him, It is a wonderful thing to us that you should call our sister incontinent; and we marvel what moves you thereto now of all times when she has been your wife so long. But the master only repeated, I tell you there is a man in the house, and I saw him. The brothers answered, We will look, and, if we find it as you have said, we will so expose and punish her, that you shall be contented: and one of them called his sister, and said to her, tell me truly hast thou any one here in the house? She replied, O me, what is it thou askest! Christ keep me therefrom, and grant that I may die before I have a part of me that could think such a thing. Oh me, should I do what no woman of our house has ever done? are you not ashamed even to speak of such a thing to me? Whereat the brother was well pleased, and they two and the master began to search together. The master went straight to those clothes, piercing them with his sword, fighting with Bucciuolo, or believing at least that he was among the linen. She said, did I not tell you he was mad; see how he is spoiling the clothes: and they, seeing what he did, were persuaded that he was mad; and when they had searched every thing there, and found nothing, one of the brothers said as he thought: and the other said, Master, master, in good truth, you are doing a shameful thing, to be making out our sister an adulteress. Whereat the master, who was enraged, and knew how much he was in the right, began to grow very angry at them, all the while holding his naked sword in his hand; wherefore they took each in hand a stout cudgel, and beat him till they broke the cudgels over his back. They then chained him like a madman, saying that he had lost his senses by overmuch study, and kept him bound all that night, while they and their sister went to sleep. And in the morning they sent for the physician, who told them to make him a bed before the fire, and not to let him speak to any body, and that they should give him no answer if he spoke, but should keep him on low diet until his intellect was cleared; all which was done. The rumour went through Bologna how this professor had gone mad, and all were very sorry for it, one saying to another, Indeed, I saw this yesterday, for he could not give us our lecture. Another said, I saw him change countenance all at once. So all agreed that he was indeed out of his senses, and so they went altogether to visit him. Bucciuolo, knowing nothing of all this, came to the school, meaning to tell his master what had happened to him; but, when he came to the school, he was told how the master had gone out of his senses. At this he marvelled, and was much grieved, and went along with the others to visit him. And as they came to the master's

house, Bucciuolo was more astonished than ever any man in this world, and was ready to faint seeing how the case stood ; but, that no one might perceive any thing, he went in together with the others. And coming into the room, he saw the master all bruised and chained lying on a bed before the fire ; whereat all the scholars condoled with their master, saying how much they were grieved to see this. So it came to Bucciuolo's turn to say something also, wherefore he said, Master, I am as sorry for you as if you were my father, and, if I can do any thing for your pleasure, dispose of me as if I were your son. The master answered, Bucciuolo, Bucciuolo, go in God's name, for thou hast learnt well at my expense. The lady said, Heed not his words, for he is wandering, and knows not what he is saying. Bucciuolo took his leave, and came to Pietro Paolo, and said to him, Brother, make ready to go in God's name, for I have learnt so much that I wish to learn no more. And then he departed, and came safely to Rome.

No. III.

[The following story is reprinted from a scarce collection of early English tales, entitled, " The Fortunate, the Deceived, and the Unfortunate Lovers," 4to., Lond., 1632, of which there are, according to Steevens, several impressions. One of a much later date is preserved in Capell's Collection at Trinity College, Cambridge. The names of the characters are altered, but it is merely an abridged translation of the preceding article.]

Two friends went to study at Bologna, in Italy. One of them would needs learn of a Doctor the art of making love. The Doctor taught him, but it was at his cost. For his scholar try'd his art upon his wife, to whom he made love in the manner you will find here related.

Two young gentlemen, who had contracted a streight bond of friendship together, went to Bologna to study, one of them the Law, the other Physick. One was called Lucius, the other Camillus. Being arrived at Bologna they lodg'd together, and apply'd themselves with very great diligence and success to the sciences to which they had addicted themselves. In fine Camillus, having ended his studies sooner than Lucius, intended to return to Rome ; and had infallibly been gone, if Lucius had not conjur'd him, by all the tenderness of the friendship

that was between them, to stay and pass away the winter with him there, that they might both return together the next spring. To be short, Camillus yielded to Lucius his intreaties, and resolved upon staying. But, that he might not pass away all his time in idleness, he had a great mind to learn some other science; and, in order to this design, he thus accosted his professor. The friendship, Doctor, which I have for Lucius, obliges me to stay here till next spring. If during this time you will do me the kindness to instruct me in some noble science, I will receive your instructions with joy, and it may be with success. Doubt not any thing on my part, answer'd the Doctor, I am ready to teach you whatsoever you shall please to learn. It is the art of making love, reply'd Camillus, which I desire to learn. I am yet but a novice, and I would fain acquire a handsom air, and gentile garb of gallantry. Ah! reply'd again the Doctor, this is a noble art indeed, an art which hath its rules and maxims, and which comes very near to poleticks. It is a science wherein I can safely boast my self an expert person; and, if you have a mind to become as great a proficient as my self, follow my precepts boldly.

What course shall I then take, said Camillus. Go, answer'd the Doctor, one morning or some Festival day, to the Church of the Cordeliers, at the time of High Mass. Take particular cognisance of the ladies which you shall see there; and, as you go out of the Church, follow her whom you like best, and lose not the sight of her till you see her at home. When you have housed her, come to me again.

Camillus lost no time. The next day he went to Church very early in the morning, where he posted himself in a place very commodious to see the ladies, and to be seen of them. He took notice of one among the rest, who pleased him extremely. She had a round visage, black eyes, a brisk and delicate complexion, a little and well shaped mouth, a bosom representing two globes of alabaster, an indifferent stature,

and well compacted. In fine, she was the epitome of all the charms and perfections that an amorous person could be taken with. He went out of the Church with her, and lost not the sight of her, till she was enter'd into her house. The lady all this while, who had taken notice in the Church of the amorous glances he had directed to her, concluded thereupon herself to be the object of his inclination.

Camillus immediately went to the Doctor to take new measures from him. The Doctor, who suspected nothing of his own wife, heard with great pleasure the report his disciple made to him of his transactions. In fine, he advis'd him to make two or three turns modestly before the house of the lady, whom he had follow'd. As soon as you see her, said he, salute her with a profound respect, to make her understand the passion which you have for her. But take your time, and do it in such a manner as not to be discover'd by any body but herself. After that, come again to me.

The lover followed his masters advice, passed modestly before the ladies house, cast his secret regards, and as he passed by, took the liberty to salute her. Which he did with a most profound respect, and at a time when there were no passengers in the street. Camillus, who was a man of a good presence, had the good fortune to please this lady. She cast attentive regards upon him, and return'd his salutation with a sweet and amiable eye. And what could Camillus conclude from these complaisances, but that this lady had a particular love for him? And indeed he found himself not deceived.

All transported with joy, he went to inform the Doctor of his good fortune. The Doctor applauded his conduct, and promis'd him a prosperous success. And, the better to carry on the affair, he advised him to an amorous letter to the lady, and to intrust it in the hands of one of those women who use to go from house to house to vend their wares, and under that pretext are easily admitted to the most private concerns of the ladies.

Camillus immediately put pen to paper, and imploy'd one of these female letter-carriers. She undertook the business ; but what success she had you will wonder to hear. She was so far from making much of this woman, that she treated her with a thousand reproachful expressions, and threw the letter in her face. What do you take me for ? said she, you old wretch, know my vertue is proof against all your stratagems. You had better pack away with speed, and must not hope to find here the penny-worths you gape so much after.

The poor woman, who was afraid of being ill handled, as well as ill treated with the tongue, packed up her bag and baggage, and away she trotted. She went presently, and gave Camillus an account of her success. Who was not a little surprized thereat, and concluded from thence, that this lady was too severe to be ever brought to his bow.

Upon this he went again to the Doctor's house, and with a melancholy tone recounted to him all that had passed. The Doctor bid him not be troubled, telling him that the tree is not fell'd with one stroke, and advis'd for all this not to fail to make another onset. Go, said he, again, and take some turns before this ladies door, and observe very well what her countenance is toward you.

So said, so done. Our lover takes heart of grace, and presently steers his course again to his mistresses house. The lady no sooner saw him, but she commanded her chambermaid to go after him, and to tell him from her, that if he would come that night to the garden door, she would speak with him. The maid, staying near the Church, and waiting his coming by, desir'd him to go along with her into the Church, for that she had something of importance to communicate to him. Camillus, though somewhat surpriz'd, however went into the Church after the maid. Who, taking him aside into a by-place, told him what she had to impart to him from her lady, and desir'd him of all loves not to fail, being present at the time and place appointed. Camillus, all trans-

ported with joy, assured her he would not fail to go and receive her ladies commands, at the hour she had appointed him.

In the interim he return'd to his Doctor, to render him an account of what had passed, and to make him a partaker of his good fortune. It was at this time that the Doctor kept himself up close in the academy, because the days being short, he was obliged to read to his scholars by night. So that Camillus found him in the academy, where the Doctor was pleased to hear the success of this last adventure. But, as he was a person naturally inclin'd to jealousy (a passion extraordinarily reigning in Italy) he oftentimes revolved in his mind the description Camillus had made to him of this lady; insomuch that it came into his head, that possibly it might be his own wife. The good man, who was pretty well in years, knew that his wife had cause enough to complain. In fine, he doubted very much, lest the gallant had learnt this science of him at his cost. Thereupon he resolv'd to follow him at a distance, after he had in form'd him of the nearest way to his mistresses house. Camillus put on a coat of a mail, and went arm'd with sword and dagger to defend himself against all assaults.

Our gallant was no sooner arriv'd at the garden-door, but he was let in. The lady received him with open arms, and gave him a world of undoubted marks of the sincerity of her affection towards him. Sir, said she, it is no hard matter for me to recollect the time since you first did me the honour to think me worthy of your love, and you may assure yourself you have not to do with an ungrateful or cruel person. Let us quench our flames together, and enjoy such charming delights as may exceed what ever the most heroick souls have yet ere comprehended. Take not in ill part, pursued she, the manner in which I lately receiv'd your amorous lines. It was necessary to proceed in that fashion, that I might conceal my love the better. And all these love-letter-carriers are, at the bottom, but a company of mercenary souls.

The chamber-maid, having shut and bolted the door, immediately the lady conducted Camillus into her chamber. The Doctor who saw Camillus enter the garden, remain'd no longer in suspense concerning this affair. Jealousy gnaw'd upon his heart, and put him in a most desperate condition. In stead of knocking at the door, he return'd to the academy, to go and fetch his arms, that he might give the fatal blow to the ravisher of his honour. But, in regard the academy was far enough from his house, his wife and her gallant in the mean while lost no time. They satisfied their passion, while the husband was taking a course to satisfy his revenge. In fine, the Doctor arrived, and knock'd at the gate with an authority no less than that of master of the house. The maid look'd out at the window, knew her master's voice, and presently went and inform'd her mistress thereof.

Judge then in what confusion and disorder, and what a peck of troubles these lovers were in. The maid, the better to give her mistress time to hide her gallant, made use of this trick. As she went down stairs in great haste, she pretended to fall; and, in the counterfeit fall, out went the candle. So that she was forc'd to go, and light it again. All this took up time, and gave opportunity to dispose of the lover in a place of security. Mean while the Doctor raps at the door with all his force. At last the maid comes, and opens it; but, as she opens it, feigns her self hurt. In rushes the Doctor, with sword in hand, runs presently up to his wives chamber, and roundly asks where the young gallant was, whom he saw enter the garden-gate?

His wife, seeming much startled at the question, answer'd There was nobody in the house, but herself and her maid; that he might search all about; and, if he found his suspicion true, she would freely be content to suffer the utmost punishment could be inflicted. Upon these words, the good man takes the candle, and looks all about in every nook and corner. His jealousy carries him into every place, into the

barn, into the cellar, into the garden. And, as he went thus looking in vain, and found nothing, his wife went after him with a candle in her hand, still redoubling her protestations, which made him apt to think at last that all was but meer illusion.

Thus the Doctor put up his sword in his scabbard, and gave the candle into his maids hands. He fancied, that it being somewhat dark, and he at a pretty distance when he thought he saw the gallant enter, possibly the young man might have enter'd into some neighbour's house. In fine, he concludes happily for his wife and gallant, that he might be deceiv'd. With these thoughts he return'd again to the academy, purposing next morning to inform himself better in this affair by his disciple.

Mean while Camillus creeps out of his prison, the gates were made fast again, and a good supper prepared. Supper being ready, they repair to the table; and supper ended, to bed. As soon as it was light, Camillus bethought himself of retiring; but before the fair one made him promise to come to her again the night following.

Our gallant, as soon as he had dispatch'd some other affairs of his, return'd to the academy, where he recited to his Doctor the pleasures he had enjoy'd with his mistress, and the troubles he had been put to through the pursuit of a jealous husband. The Doctor, who put a good face upon the business, and made the best of a bad market, ask'd him in what place he had been hidden? Camillus answer'd him, that he had been hidden in a heap of linnen which was but half dry.* In conclusion, he expressed his high obligation to the Doctor, for that by his instructions he had gain'd possession of a lady, whose beauty far surpass'd all the beauties

* See Malone's Shakespeare by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 210. From this passage Malone thinks it highly probable that Shakespeare had read this tale. I suppose he conjectures that an earlier edition was published than any now known.

of the town. Moreover, he protested, that the goddess of love and beauty had not a body more curiously frained than hers. At length he inform'd the Doctor, that in the evening he was to go again, and to pass the following night with her. And, as he had taken but little repose the foregoing night, he said he would go and take some rest, to the end he might be the better enabled to perform his duty the night following. The Doctor thereupon intreated him to come again, and see him, before he went to his mistress. Camillus promis'd him he would, and so they parted.

The Doctor began to have his eyes opened, before Camillus had time to shut his. He was hardly able to contain himself, while Camillus was yet speaking; and his jealousy seized so strongly upon his spirit, that he could scarce make his lecture to his scholars. His heart was even transported with grief, and he had no consolation but in his hopes of revenging himself upon the dishonesty of his wife and her gallant.

Evening being come, Camillus came to see him, and to tell him he was just going. Go in a good hour, said the Doctor, and to morrow morning fail not to come again, and give me an account of your adventures. But our gallant was no sooner gone, but the Doctor all armed as he was, threw his cloak over his shoulders, and follow'd him fair and softly. He thought to overtake him by that time he got to the garden-door. But the fair one, who with impatience expected his arrival, as soon as she discern'd it was her lover, let him in, and shut the door after him.

Presently after arriv'd the Doctor, knockt at the door with all his might, and made a horrible outcry. His wife putting Camillus behind her, asked who was there? The Doctor, storming and making a fearful noise, commanded her to open. As she open'd the Door she put out the candle, took her husband in with one hand, and with the other thrust Camillus out, who nimbly made his escape. As good luck would have it, the Doctor perceiv'd nothing. The Lady immediately began

to cry out for help, as fearing he would kill her, and excepting the succor of the neighbourhood, she and her maid held the good man fast by the arms. The neighbours, all alarm'd, came in from all parts. They beheld the Dr. armed cap-a-pe, a spectacle sufficiently surprizing. His wife made him pass for a lunatick,* and told the neighbours her husband was grown mad with over-much study. They, seeing him in that posture, easily beleived her. And, while they used all their endeavours to persuade him to go and repose him, I repose my selfe said the Doctor, at a time when this wicked woman keeps a gallant lockt up in my house, a gallant whom with my own eyes I saw enter. Unhappy woman that I am, reply'd his wife, to have to do with such a husband! Ask all the neighbours, if ever they saw any ill action by me. Pray, Mr. Doctor, said all the good neighbours, be not over-hasty to entertain any such thought of your wife. Certainly you deceive yourself, and the lady is too honest for you to have any such suspicion of her. You know not, said he, what you say : for my part I saw a man enter here a while ago, and know who he is. It is the same person who came hither last night, and I thought to surprize, but that this wicked woman hid him under a great heap of linnen.

As he was going on in his speech, in come his wive's brothers, whom she had sent out for. As soon as ever she saw them, she went to them with her eyes all bathed in tears, and thus address'd her speech to them. Assist me, my dear brothers, in this unhappy condition to which you see me now reduced. My husband is become mad, and hath a design to murther me. A conceit is enter'd into his pate, that I keep a man here for my pleasure. I leave it to you to judge, whether I am such a person as he would have me thought to be. The brothers immediately discourse the Doctor, and blame him for his folly and injustice. I am certain, said the

* "This is lunatics! this is mad as a mad dog!" observes Evans, alluding to Ford's jealousy. See "Merry Wives of Windsor," act. iv., sc. 2.

Doctor, there is a man here, whom this impudent woman let in before my face not above a quarter of an hour since.

See if it be so, said the brothers ; and, if we find him here, assure yourself, Doctor, we will chastise our sister according to her merit. Upon this one of them took his sister aside, and pray'd her, if she had any person concealed in the house, to confess it, to the end she might save her honour. His sister, who knew well enough there was no body, protested she was altogether innocent of the crime laid to her charge, and that she would willingly suffer death, if they found her culpable. Her brother was extremely satisfy'd with her answer.

In fine, the Doctor, and his wives brothers, having placed the neighbours at the gate of the house to hinder this pretended gallant from making his escape, went and made search in every corner of the house. They came at last to the heap of linnen which was still remaining in the fair one's chamber, where Camillus had been concealed the night before. The Doctor made no question but to find his wives gallant in the heap of linnen, takes out the linnen piece by piece, but found not the person he lookt for.* His wife presently began to cry out, Do you not see now plainly, that he is mad? It is but too evident, answer'd one of them. If he have not lost his senses, said another of them, we must needs conclude him to be a very naughty man, thus to disgrace our sister as he hath done.

Mean while the Doctor, knowing very well how the case stood, brake forth into a rage, and having his sword still drawn in his hand, began to run at his brothers-in-Law. They having none of them a sword, took each of them a good cudgel, and having first disarmed him, belabour'd him in a most severe manner. This done, they bound him as a mad-man ; and, for fear any misfortune should happen, lodged themselves in the house. The next morning they sent for a

* The reader will at once perceive the strong similarity between this scene and Ford's examination of the buck-basket.

physician, who order'd that no body should speak to him, and that he should be kept to a diet.

Presently news was spread through the whole town, that the Dr. was run mad, and upon this report a thousand reflexions were made. Don't you remember, said one of his scholars to another, that yesterday he could not go on with his lecture to us? Truly, said the other, the Doctor seem'd very much altered from what he used to be, so that in effect he appear'd clear another man. Camillus all this while knew nothing of all this, till such time as he came again to the academy, to give the Doctor an account of his last adventure. Then it was that he understood from the scholars, that the Doctor had lost his senses, and that he lay chain'd up in his own house. He shewed himself very much troubled at the news, and took a resolution with some other of the scholars to go and give him a visit.

Our gallant was very much startled, when he saw the Doctor all battered and bruised with striving to break his chains, and lying upon a bed by the fire-side. He was ready to drop down at the sight of so sad a spectacle; but the Doctor's wife being there took Camillus aside, and recited all that had passed. As for Camillus, he then first began to understand that it was from her husband he had received all his instructions of love.

All the intrigue being discover'd between them, Camillus was thinking to retire, and not see the Doctor any more. But his mistriss perswaded him to go in again, well knowing that what ever the Doctor could possibly say, the company would never give any credit to the word of a person that went for a mad-man. Camillus then approached the Doctor, and testified very much sorrow to see him in that condition. The Doctor looking upon him with a fierce look, The Devil take you, said he, Camillus, don't come hither to mock me. You have very well learnt the art of love at my cost. My dear cavalier, said the Doctor's wife, take no heed to what he saith, for he

is out of his wits. Thou hast good reason, infamous woman, said the Doctor, to call him thy cavalier.

At these words the lady tipt Camillus a wink with her eye, to follow her into her chamber. Where, in regard Lucius had taken a firm resolution to part within two days, he advertis'd his mistriss thereof. Who thereupon was most desperately afflicted, conjured and importuned him of all loves to stay. But he could not be prevailed with. In fine, after many tender endearments, and reciprocal promises of eternal love, Camillus took leave of his mistriss. At parting he put a diamond ring upon her finger, and she on the other side took off a chain of gold from her neck, and pray'd him to keep it as a pledge of her love. Soon after, redoubling their kisses and embraces, they took leave of each other.

The morrow after Camillus obliged Lucius to be gone. And, as they were upon the way in their journey, he imparted the story of his adventures to him; and so by little journeys they arrived in their due time at Rome.

No. IV.

[From "Le tredici piacevoli notti del S. Gio. Fr. Straparola," 8vo., Vineg. 1569, vol. i., folio 129.]

Sono molti dilettevoli donne i quali per aver lungo tempo dato opera al studio delle buone lettere si pensano molte cose sapere e poi ò nulla ò poco sanno. E mentre questi tali credonsi segnare il fronte, a se stesse cavano gli occhi siccome avvenne ad un medico molto scientiato nell'arte sua il quale persuadendosi d'altrui uccellare fu non senza suo grave danno ignominiosamentè uccellato, si come per la presente favola che raccontarvi intendo potrete pienamente comprendere. Gallese re di Portogallo hebbe un figliuolo Nerino per nome chiamato, et in tal maniera il fece nudrire ch'egli (sino a tanto che non pervenisse al decim'ottavo anno della sua età) non potesse vedere donna alcuna se non la madre e la balia che lo nudricava.

Venuto adunque Nerino alla età perfetta determinò il re di mandarlo in studio a Padova accioche egli imparasse le lettere latine la lingua e i costumi Italiani e così come egli determinò così fece. Hora essendo il giovane Nerino in Padova e havendo presa amicitia di molti scolari che quotidianamente il corteggiavano avvenne che tra questi v'era un medico che maestro Raimondo Brunello Fisico si nominava et sovente ragionando tra loro diverse cose si misero (come è usanza di giovani) a ragionare della bellezza delle donne e chi diceva l'una e chi l'altra cosa. Ma Nerino percioche per lo adietro non haveva veduta donna alcuna eccetto la madre e la balia sua animosamente diceva che per suo giudicio non si trovava al mondo donna che fusse piu bella piu leggiadra e piu attilata che la madre sua. Et essendone state a lui dimostrate molte, tutte come carogne a comparazione della madre sua, reputava. Maestro Raimondo ch'aveva una moglie delle belle donne che mai la natura facesse postosi la gorgiera delle ciancie disse. S. Nerino io ho veduta una donna di tal bellezza che quando voi la vedeste forse non la riputareste meno anzi piu bella della madre vostra. A cui rispose Nerino ch'egli credere non lo poteva ch'ella fosse piu formosa della madre sua ma che ben harebbe piacere di vederla. A cui disse maestro Raimondo quando vi sia a grado di vederla mi offerisco di mostrarvela. Di questo (rispose Nerino) ne sarò molto contento e vi rimarrò obligato. Disse allora M. Raimondo. Poiche vi piace di vederla verrete domattina nella chiesa del domo che vi prometto che la vedrete. Et andatosene a casa disse alla moglie. Domane lievati di letto per tempo, et acconciati il capo e fatti bella e vestiti honoratissimamente perciò io voglio che tu vadi nell'ora della messa solenne del domo ad udir l'officio. Genobia (così era il nome della moglie di messer Raimondo) non essendo usa di andar hor quinci hor quindi ma la maggior parte si stava in casa a cucire e ricamare molto di questo si maravigliò ma percioche così egli voleva et era il desiderio suo ella così fece e si mise in punto e conciossi si fattamente che

non donna anzi Dea pareva. Andatasene adunque Genobbia nel sacro tempio si come il marito l'haveva imposto venne Nerino figliuolo del re in chiesa e veduta Genobbia tra se stesso bellissima la giudicò. Partita la bella Genobbia sopraggiunse maestro Raimondo e accostatosi a Nerino disse. Hor che vi pare di quella donne che hora e partita di chiesa? parvi ch'ella patisca oppositione alcuna? E ella piu bella della madre vostra? Veramente disse Nerino ch'ella è bella e la natura piu bella far non la potrebbe. Ma ditemi per cortesia di cui è ella moglie e dove habita? A cui maestro Raimondo non rispose a verso, percioche dirglielo non voleva. Allora disse Nerino. Maestro Raimondo mio se voi non volete dirmi chi ella sia e dove habita almeno contentatemi di questo ch'io un'altra fiata la vegga. Ben volontieri rispose M. Raimondo. Dimane verrete qua in chiesa e io farò sì che come hoggi la vedrete. Et andatosene a casa M. Raimondo disse alla moglie Genobbia apparecchiati per domattina che io voglio che tu vadi a messa nel domo e se mai tu ti festi bella e pomposamente vestisti fa che dimane il facci. Genobbia di ciò come prima stavasi maravigliosa. Ma percioche importava il comandamento del marito ella fece tanto quanto per lui imposto le fu. Venuto il giorno Genobbia riccamente vestita e vie piu del solito ornata in chiesa se n'andò. E non stette molto che Nerino venne il qual veggendola bellissima tanto del lei amore s'infiammò quanto mai uomo di donna facesse. Et essendo giunto maestro Raimondo Nerino lo prego che egli dir li dovesse chi era costei che sì bella agli occhi suoi pareva. Ma fingendo Maestro Raimondo di haver pressa per rispetto delle pratiche sue nulla allora dir gli volse, ma lasciato il giovane cuocersi nel suo unto lietamente si partì. La onde Nerino alquanto d'ira acceso per lo poco conto che maestro Raimondo haveva mostrato farsi di lui tra se stesso disse. Tu non vuoi ch'io sappia chi ella sia, e dove habiti et io lo saprò a tuo malgrado. Et uscito della chiesa tanto aspettò che la bella donna ancor uscì della chiesa fuori e fattali riverenza con modesto

modo e volto allegro fino a casa l'accompagnò. Havendo adunque Nerino chiaramente compresa la casa dove ella habitava, cominciò vagheggiarla ne sarebbe passato un giorno che egli non fusse dieci volte passato dinanzi la casa sua. E desiderando di parlar con lei andava imaginandosi che via egli potesse tenere per laquale l'onor della donna rimanesse salvo et egli ottenesse lo intento suo. Et havendo pensato e ripensato ne trovando alcun remedio che salutifero li fusse pur tanto fantastico che gli venne fatto di haver l'amicitia d'una vecchiarella la quale aveva la sua casa all'incontro di quella di Genobbia. Et fattole certi presentuzzi et confermata la stretta amicitia secretamente se ne andava in casa sua. Haveva la casa di questa vecchiarella una finestra la quale guardava nella sala della casa di Genobbia e per quella a suo bel agio poteva vederla andare sù e quì per casa ma non voleva scoprirsi per non darle materia di non lasciarsi piu vedere. Stando dunque Nerino ogni giorno in questo segreto vagheggiamento nè potendo resistere all'ardente fiamma che gli abbruciava il cuore deliberò tra se stesso di scriverle una lettera e gettargliela in casa a tempo che li paresse che'l marito non fusse in casa. Et così gliela gettò. Et questo egli più volte fece. Ma Genobbia senza altrimenti leggierla ne altro pensando la gettava nel fuoco e l'abbruciava. Et quantunque ella avesse tal effetto fatto più fiate, pur una volta le parve di aprirgliene una e veder quello che dentro si conteneva. Et apertala et veduto come il scrittore era Nerino figliuolo del Re di Portogallo di lei fieramente innamorato, stette al quanto sopra di se ma poi considerando alla mala vita che'l marito suo le dava fece buon animo e cominciò far buona ciera a Nerino e dato buon ordine lo introdusse in casa e il giovane le raccontò il sommo amore, ch'egli le portava; et i tormenti che per lei ogn'ora sentiva e parimente il modo come fusse di lei innamorato. Et ella che bella piacevole e pietosa era il suo amore non gli negò. Essendo dunque ambeduo d'un reciproco amore congiunti, et stando ne gli amorosi ragionamenti ecco maestro Raimondo

picchiare a l'uscio. Ilche Genobbia sentendo fece Nerino coricarsi sopra il letto e stese le cortine ivi dimorare sino a tanto che'l marito si partisse. Entrato il marito in casa e prese alcune sue cosette senza avedersene di cosa alcuna si partì. Et altresì fece Nerino. Venuto il giorno seguente et essendo Nerino in piazza a passeggiare per aventura passò maestro Raimondo a cui Nerino fece di cenno che gli voleva parlare e accostatosi a lui li disse. Messere non vi ho io da dir una buona novella? Et che disse maestro Raimondo? Non so io (disse Nerino) la casa di quella bellissima Madonna? Et non sono io stato in piacevoli ragionamenti con esso lei e perciò che il suo marito venne a casa ella mi nascose nel letto e tirò le cortine accioche egli vedermi non potesse e subito si partì. Disse maestro Raimondo è possibil questo? Rispose Nerino possibile e il vero ne mai vidi la piu festevole ne la piu gratiata donna di lei. Se per caso messere mio voi andaste a lei fate che mi raccomandate pregandola che la mi conservi nella sua buona gratia. A cui maestro Raimondo promesse di farlo e di mala voglia di lui si partì. Ma prima disse a Nerino gli tornarete piu? A cui rispose Nerino pensatel voi. Et andatosene maestro Raimondo a casa non volse dir cosa alcuna alla moglie ma aspettare il tempo di ritrovarli insieme, yenuto il giorno seguente Nerino a Genobbia ritornò e mentre stavano in amorosi piaceri e dilettevoli ragionamenti venne a casa il marito. Ma ella subito nascose Nerino in una cassa a rimpetto della quale pose molte robbe ch'ella sborrava acciò che non si tarmassino. Il marito fingendo di cercare certe sue cose, gettò sottasopra tutta la casa e guatando sino nel letto e nulla trovando con piu riposato animo si partì e alle sue pratiche se n'andò. Et Nerino parimente si partì. Et ritrovato maestro Raimondo gli disse. Signor dottore non sono io ritornato da quella gentildonna? e la invidiosa fortuna mi ha disconzo ogni piacere, perciò che il lei marito sopra giunse e disturbò il tutto. E come facesti disse Maestro Raimondo? Ella (rispose Nerino) prese una

cassa e mi pose dentro e a rimpetto della cassa pose molte vestimenta ch'ella governava che non si tarmassino. Et egli il letto sottosopra volgendo e rivolgendo e nulla trovando si partì. Quanto questa cosa tormentosa fusse a maestro Raimondo pensare il puo chiunque ha provato amore. Haveva Nerino a Genobbia donato un bello e pretioso diamante il quale dentro le legature nell'oro haveva scolpito il capo e nome suo; e venuto il giorno e essendo M. Raimondo andato alle sue pratiche Nerino fu dalla donna in casa introdotto e stando con esso lei in piaceri e grati ragiamenti ecco il marito che ritorno a casa. Ma Genobia cattivella veggendosi della venuta sua immantiuente aperse un scrigno grande ch'era nella sua camera e dentro lo nascose. Et maestro Raimondo entrato in casa, fingendo di cercare certe sue cose rivolse la camera sotto sopra e nulla trovando ne in letto ne nelle casse come sbalordito prese il fuoco et a tutti i quattro cantoni della camera lo pose con determinato animo d'abbrusciar la camera e tutto cio che in quella si conteneva. Già i parieti e travamenta cominciarono ardere quando Genobbia voltatasi contra il marito disse. Che vuol dir questo marito mio? Siete forse voi divenuto pazzo? Se pur voi volete abbrusciare la casa, bruciatela in vostro piacere ma in fede mia non abbrusciarete quel scrigno dove sono le scritture che appartengono alla dote mia? E fatti chiamare quattro valenti bastagi gli fece trahere di casa lo scrigno e ponerlo in casa della vicina vecchiarella, e celatamente l'aprì che niuno se n'avide e ritornossene a casa. L'insensato maestro Raimondo stava pur a vedere se usciva fuori alcuno che non gli piacesse ma nulla vedeva se non l'insopportabile fumo e ardente fuoco che la casa abbrusciava. Erano già concorsi i vicini per estinguer il fuoco e tanto si operarono che finalmente lo spensero. Il giorno seguente Nerino andando verso il Prato dalla Valle in maestro Raimondo si abbattè e salutatolo disse maestro mio, non vi ho io da raccontare una cosa che molto vi piacerà? Et che? rispose maestro Raimondo? Io (disse Nerino) ho fuggito il piu spa-

ventevole pericolo che mai fuggisse huomo che porti vita. Andai a casa di quella gentil madonna e dimorando con esso lei in piacevoli ragionamenti sopraggiunse il suo marito il quale dopò c'hebbe rivolta la casa sottosopra, accese il fuoco e poselo in tutti i quattro cantoni della camera e abbruciò ciò che era in camera. Et voi (disse maestro Raimondo) dove eravate? io (rispose Nerino) era nascoso nel scrigno che ella fuori di casa mandò. Il che maestro Raimondo intendendo, e conoscendo ciò che egli raccontava esser il vero, da dolore e passione si sentiva morire ma pur non osava scoprirsi per cioche desiderava di vederlo nel fatto. E dissegli. Signor Nerino vi ritornarete voi mai piu? a cui rispose Nerino. Havendo io scampato il fuoco di che piu temenza debbo io havere? Hor messi da canto questi ragionamenti, Maestro Raimondo prego Nerino che si degnasse di andare il giorno seguente a desinar seco, il giovane accettò volentieri l'invito. Venuto il giorno seguente, maestro Raimondo invitò tutti i suoi parenti e quelli della moglie ancora e apparecchiò un pomposo e superbo prandio in un'altra bellissima casa e comandò alla moglie che ancor ella venisse ma che non dovesse sedere a mensa ma che stesse nascosta e preparasse quello che faceva mestieri. Raunati adunque tutti i parenti e il giovane Nerino furono posti a mensa e maestro Raimondo con la sua maccaronesca scienza cercò di enebriare Nerino per poter poifare il parer suo. Laonde havendoli piu volte porto maestro Raimondo il beccchiere pieno di malvatico vino, e havendolo Nerino ogni volta bevuto disse Maestro Raimondo. Deh Sig. Nerino raccontate un poco a questi parenti nostri una qualche novelluzza da ridere. Il povero giovane Nerino non sapendo che Genobbia fusse moglie di maestro Raimondo, cominciò raccontargli l'istoria riservando poi il nome di ciascuno. Avenne che una servente andò in camera dove Genobbia dimorava, e dissele. Mia donna se voi foste in un cantone nascosta, voi sentireste raccontar la piu bella novella che mai udiste alla vita vostra, venite vi prego. Et andatasene in un cantone conobbe che la voce era di Nerino suo amante e che

l'historya ch'egli raccontava lei perteneva. E da donna prudente e saggia tolse il diamante che Nerino donato le haveva e poselo in una tazza d'argento piena d'una delicata bevanda, et disse al servente. Prendi questa tazza, e recala a Nerino, e digli che egli la beva che poi meglio ragionerà. Il servente presa la tazza, portolla à Nerino, e dissegli. Pigliate questa tazza e bevete signore che poi meglio ragionerete. Et egli presa la tazza bevè tutto il vino e veduto e conosciuto il diamante che vi era dentro lo lasciò andar in bocca, e fingendo di nettarsi la bocca, lo trasse fuori, e se lo mise in dito. Et accortosi Nerino che la bella donna di cui ragionava era mogliè di maestro Raimondo piu oltre passare non volse et stimolato da maestro Raimondo, e da i parenti che l'historya cominciata seguisse egli rispose. Et si et si cantò il gallo e subito fu di e dal sonno risvegliato altro piu non vidi. Questo udendo i parenti di Maestro Raimondo e prima credendo che tutto quello che Nerino gli aveva detto della moglie esser vero trattarono l'uno e l'altro da grandissimi embriachi. Dopo alquanti giornì Nerino trovò maestro Raimondo et fingendo di non sapere che egli fosse marito di Genobbia dissegli che fra due giorni era per partirsi, percioche il padre scritto gli aveva, ch'a tutto tornasse nel suo reame. Maestro Raimondo li rispose che fosse il ben andato. Nerino messo secreto ordine con Genobbia con lei se ne fuggì et in Portogallo la trasferì dove con somma allegrezza lungamente vissero. E maestro Raimondo andatosene a casa e non trovata la moglie, fra pochi giorni disperato se ne morì.

[TRANSLATION.]

There are many charming ladies who, because of their having long laboured in the study of letters, do think themselves to know much, and yet, for all that, know little or nothing. And these, while they think they are but making the cross on their forehead, they take out their own eyes; as happened to a physician, skilful in his profession, who, thinking to catch another, was, to his great loss, entangled himself; as, by the present fable, which I am going to relate to you, you may clearly understand.

Gallese, King of Portugal, had a son named Nerino, whom he so brought up, that, till the eighteenth year of his age, he had seen no woman but his own mother, and the woman who nursed him. When Nerino had reached this age, his father resolved to send him to study at Padua, that he might learn the Latin literature, and the language and manners of Italy; and, as he had resolved, so he did. Now the young Nerino, being in Padua, and having made the acquaintance of many scholars who daily paid their court to him, it chanced that there was among them a physician named Raimondo Brunello Fisico. These two, often discoursing with each other on various matters, began, as young men are apt to do, to speak of the beauty of woman; and one said one thing, and another another. But Nerino, who had as yet never seen any woman but his mother and his nurse, boldly declared that in his judgment there was no woman in the world more beautiful, graceful, or elegant, than his mother. And, though many beautiful women were shewn him, he declared that all were ugly in comparison with her. Maestro Raimondo, who had to wife one of the most beautiful women that Nature ever made, said to him (meaning to have a jest at his expense) Signor Nerino, I have seen a lady of such loveliness, that if you were to see her you would repute her not less beautiful than your mother, perhaps even more so. To which Nerino answered, that he could not indeed credit what his friend had said, but that nevertheless it would much please him to see her. When it shall please you to do so, said Raimondo, I offer my services to shew her to you. With this, answered Nerino, I shall be much delighted, and shall be under much obligation to you for it. Then, said Messer Raimondo, since it pleases you to see her, you shall come to-morrow to the cathedral church, and there I promise to shew her to you. And going to his own house, he said to his wife, To-morrow rise by times, and order thy head-dress carefully, and adorn thyself and dress thyself splendidly, for I wish thee to go to hear the solemn mass at the Cathedral. Genobbia (for so the lady of Messer Raimondo was named), not being accustomed to go hither and thither, staying mostly at home sewing and embroidering, was no little surprised at this; but as he so wished and desired, she did as he bade her, and decked herself, and that with such skill that she appeared less a mortal than a goddess.

Genobbia then, being gone to the church, as her husband ordered, the king's son, Nerino, came thither also; and, seeing Genobbia, thought within himself that she was certainly a most beautiful woman. When the fair Genobbia was gone, Master Raymond came up, and, accosting himself to Nerino, said, What think you now of this lady who has just gone out of the church? think you that she will bear any rival? is she more beautiful than your lady mother? Truly, said Nerino, she is so beautiful that Nature

could not make her more so. But tell me of your courtesy, whose wife she is and where she lives. Whereto Master Raymond did not suddenly answer, as not wishing to tell him the truth. Then, said Nerino, my good Master Raymond, if you will not tell me who she is and where she lives, at least be so good as to allow that I see her again. Willingly, replied the other. Come hither to-morrow, and I will contrive that you shall see her, as you have seen her to-day.

And going home, Master Raymond said to his wife, Genobbia, prepare thyself for to-morrow, for I wish thee to go to mass in the cathedral church ; and, if ever thou madest thyself beautiful, and wert dressed splendidly, do so to-morrow. Genobbia wondered much at this, as she had done before : but, as the command of her husband was positive, she did what he had commanded her ; and, when the day came, went to the church richly clad, and with much more ornament than she was accustomed to wear. Nor did she wait long before Nerino came, who, seeing her so very beautiful, was so inflamed with love of her as never man for woman. And Master Raymond being come, Nerino again begged that he would tell him who this was who was so beautiful in his eyes. But the physician, pretending to be in great haste upon his own business, gave him no manner of answer, but went carelessly away, leaving the youth devoted with impatience ; whence Nerino, somewhat angered by the little esteem which Master Raymond seemed to hold him in, said within himself—Thou art not willing, then, that I should know who she is and where she lives, but I will know it in spite of thee. And going out of the church, he waited till the fair lady came out too ; and, making his reverence to her, accompanied her, in modest manner and with cheerful countenance, to her own house.

Nerino having thus made out clearly the house where she lived, began to watch for and pay his court to her ; and no day passed in which he did not walk ten times before her door ; and, desiring to speak with her, he went imagining within himself how he should obtain his wish, and her honour remain uninjured. And having thought and thought again, and finding no plan by which he could accomplish his purpose, yet he took so much pains that he obtained the friendship of an old woman whose house was opposite that of Genobbia ; and, having made her certain presents, and ingratiated himself fully with her, he went into her house. The house of this old woman had a window which looked into the principal room of Genobbia's house, and by this he could, at his ease, see her go up and down in the house ; but he did not choose to discover himself, lest he should give her cause to withdraw herself from his sight.

Nerino standing, then, thus every day secretly on the watch, and being unable to resist the ardent flame which was consuming his heart, determined

with himself to write her a letter, and to throw it into her house at a time when he imagined that her husband was not there. And this he did, and did, too, more than once; but Genobbia, without reading the letters, or thinking more of them, threw them into the fire. But though she had done this many times, yet once she had a mind to open one of the letters, and to see what was in it; and having done so, and seen that the writer was Nerino, son of the King of Portugal, who was violently in love with her, she hesitated awhile. But considering with herself the evil life which her husband led her, she took courage, and began to encourage Nerino. Wherefore she took order to introduce him into the house; and he recounted to her the great love he bore her, and the torments he continually endured for her, and also how he came to be in love with her: and she, who was beautiful, amiable, and pitiful, did not deny him her love. Both, then, being bound by a mutual love, and standing in amorous talk, behold Master Raymond knocks at the door; hearing which, Genobbia bade Nerino lie down upon the bed, and remain there with the curtains drawn till her husband was gone. The husband came into the house, and, taking some matters he had come to seek, departed without noticing any thing: and Nerino did the same. When the next day came, and Nerino was walking in the public place, by chance passed Master Raymond, to whom Nerino beckoned that he wished to speak to him; and, when he came up to him, said—Sir, have I not a pleasant story to tell you? What is it? said Master Raymond. Perhaps, said Nerino, I do not know the house of that most beautiful lady, nor have been engaged in the most pleasant discourse with her; and because her husband came home she hid me in the bed, and drew the curtains that he might not see me, and so he straightway departed. Is this possible? said Master Raymond. It is possible and true, replied the other, and I never saw a more festive or a more gracious lady. If you, sir, should visit her, remember me to her, praying her to keep me in her good favour. To whom the other promised that he would do so, and departed ill content with him. But, first, he said to Nerino, Will you go thither again? to which Nerino answered, You may suppose it. And Master Raymond, going home, resolved to say nothing to his wife, but to await his opportunity of finding them together.

The next day Nerino returned to Genobbia; and, whilst they were in loving discourse together, the husband came to the house, whereupon she hid her lover in a chest, before which she placed a quantity of clothes, in such a manner that they should not see him. The husband, pretending to be seeking something he had left, turned over the whole house, prying every where, even into the bed; but, finding nothing, he went away, somewhat quieter in mind, to his business, and Nerino did the same. And, meeting with the physician, Nerino said, Signor doctor, have I not returned from the house of that lady?

but fortune, envious of our pleasure, spoiled it all, for her husband came upon us and disturbed every thing. And what didst thou? inquired Master Raymond. She, replied Nerino, took a chest and placed me therein, and put a number of clothes before it, which she so disposed that they should not see me; and he, turning the bed over and over, and finding nothing, went away.

How tormenting this was to Master Raymond may any one think who has experienced what a thing love is. Nerino had given to Genobbia a beautiful and precious diamond, which had his figure and name sculptured within the gold of the setting; and when day was come, and the husband was gone to his patients, Nerino was introduced by the lady into the house; and, while he was engaged in pleasant discourse with her, behold again the husband comes home. But the cunning Genobbia, aware of his coming, opened a large desk which was in her chamber, and hid him in it. And Master Raymond coming into his house, and pretending to be seeking somewhat, turned the whole room upside down, and finding nothing either in the bed or the chests, like a madman, took a light, and set fire to the room at the four corners, with firm intention to burn the room and all that was in it. The walls and beams were already on fire, when Genobbia turned to her husband and said, Husband, what is this? are you mad perhaps? if you choose to burn the house, burn it, but, by my faith, you shall not burn this desk, where are the writings belonging to my fortune. And calling four able porters, she made them take the desk from her house and put it in that of the old woman her neighbour: then she secretly opened it, so that no one should see her, and returned to her husband. The mad physician stood waiting to see if any one was coming out whom he did not choose to have within, but he saw nothing except an intolerable smoke, and a blazing fire that was burning up the whole house. By this time the neighbours were collected to extinguish it, in which at last they succeeded.

The next day, Nerino going towards the Prato della Valle, fell in with Master Raymond, and, saluting him, said, Have I not a thing to tell you, master, which will please you much? And what is it? replied Master Raymond. I have escaped, said he, the greatest danger that living man ever ran. I went to the house of the fair lady, and, being in pleasant discourse with her, her husband came, and, after throwing every thing into confusion, took a light and set fire to the four corners of the chamber, to burn all that was in it. And where were you? said Master Raymond. I was hidden, said he, in the desk which she sent out of the room. Hearing which, and knowing all he said to be truth, Master Raymond was almost dead with grief and passion, but yet dare not discover himself, because he wished to find him in the fact. And he said to him, Signor Nerino, will you return

thither again? to which Nerino replied, Having escaped the fire, what more should I fear?

Now, putting these discourses aside, Master Raymond begged Nerino that he would condescend to dine with him the next day, which invitation the youth willingly accepted. On the day fixed, Master Raymond invited all his relations, and those of his wife also, and prepared a splendid and pompous banquet in another magnificent house, and bade his wife come also, but not to sit at table, but keep out of sight, and prepare what was necessary. When, then, all the guests were assembled, and Nerino among the rest, the physician tried, with all his might, to make him drunk, that he might afterwards carry into effect his design against him. To which end, having several times filled his goblet with strong wine, and Nerino having as often drunk, his host said to him, Signor Nerino, be so good as to tell these our relations some story that may make them laugh. The poor youth, not knowing that his Genobbia was the wife of his entertainer, began to tell them the story, keeping to himself, however, the name of all parties. It so happened, that a servant went into the chamber where Genobbia was, and said to her, My lady, if you were hidden in some corner, you might hear the finest story that ever you heard told in your life—I pray you come. And she, going into a hiding-place, perceived that the voice was that of Nerino, and that the story he was telling belonged to herself. Wherefore, like a prudent lady, she took the diamond which Nerino had given her, and put it in a silver cup full of a choice wine, and said to the servant, Take this cup, and carry it to Nerino, and tell him to drink it, and he will afterwards speak better. The servant took the cup, carried it to Nerino, and said to him, Take this cup, signor, and drink, and afterwards you will talk better. And he, taking the cup, drunk out the wine; and seeing and recognizing the diamond that was in it, he let it go into his mouth, and then, feigning to wipe his mouth, took it out, and put it upon his finger; and, perceiving that the lady of whom he spoke was the wife of Master Raymond, he would tell no more. But, being pressed by his host and the guests that he should go on with his story, he said, And so—and so—the cock crowed, and I woke from my dream, and saw nothing more.

Hearing this, the relations, who had imagined at first that all which Nerino had told them of the lady was true, burst into loud laughter. After some days, Nerino met Master Raymond, and, pretending not to know that he was the husband of Genobbia, told him, that within two days he should depart, because his father had written to him, to say that, by all means, he should return into his kingdom. Master Raymond bade him good speed; and Nerino, taking secret order with Genobbia, fled with her,

and took her to Portugal, where they lived in great happiness many years. And Master Raymond, going to his house, and not finding his wife there, within a few days died of despair.

No. V.

[From Tarlton's "Newes out of Purgatorie," 4to., London, 1590, taken from the preceding novel of Straparola. This tale has been reprinted by Malone, and also in Mr. Collier's "Shakespeare's Library." Dr. Farmer is of opinion that the adventures of Falstaff are taken from this story.]

The tale of the two lovers of Pisa, and why they were whipt in purgatory with nettles.

In Pisa, a famous cittie of Italye, there lived a gentleman of good linage and landes, feared as well for his wealth, as honoured for his vertue; but, indeed, well thought on for both: yet the better for his riches. This gentleman had one onelye daughter, called Margaret, who for her beauty was liked of all, and desired of many: but neither might their sutes, nor her owne prevaile about her fathers resolution, who was determynd not to marrye her, but to such a man as should be able in abundance to maintain the excellency of her beauty. Divers yong gentlemen proffered large feoffments, but in vaine; a maide shee must bee still: till at last an olde doctor in the towne, that professed physicke, became a sutor to her, who was a welcome man to her father, in that he was one of the welthiest men in all Pisa. A tall strippling he was, and a proper youth, his age about fourescore; his heade as white as milke, wherein, for offence sake, there was left never a tooth: but it is no matter; what he wanted in person he had in the purse; which the poore gentlewoman little regarded, wishing rather to tie herselfe to one that might fit her content, though they lived meanely, then to him with all the wealth in Italye. But shee was yong, and forcest to follow her father's direction, who, upon large covenants, was content his daughter should marry with the doctor; aud whether she likte him

or no, the match was made up, and in short time she was married. The poore wench was bound to the stake, and had not onely an olde impotent man, but one that was so jealous as none might enter into his house without suspition, nor shee do any thing without blame : the least glance, the smallest countenance, any smile, was a manifest instance to him, that shee thought of others better then himselfe ; thus he himselfe lived in a hell, and tormented his wife in as ill perplexitie. At last it chaunced, that a young gentleman of the citie comming by her house, and seeing her look out at her window, noting her rare and excellent proportion, fell in love with her, and that so extreameleye, as his passions had no meanes till her favour might mittigate his heartsicke discontent. The yong man that was ignorant in amorous matters, and had never beene used to courte anye gentlewoman, thought to reveale his passions to some one freend that might give him counsaile for the winning of her love ; and thinking experience was the surest maister, on a daye seeing the olde doctor walking in the churche—that was Margaret's husband — little knowing who he was, he thought this was the fittest man to whom he might discover his passions, for that hee was olde and knewe much, and was a physition that with his drugges might helpe him forward in his purposes : so that, seeing the old man walke solitary, he joinde unto him ; and, after a curteous salute, tolde him that he was to impart a matter of great import unto him ; wherein, if hee would not onely be secrete, but indeavour to pleasure him, his pains should bee every way to the full considered. You must imagine, gentleman, quoth Mutio—for so was the doctor's name—that men of our profession are no blabs, but hold their secrets in their hearts' bottome ; and therefore reveale what you please, it shall not onely be concealed, but cured, if either my heart or counsaile may doo it. Upon this Lionell — so was the young gentleman called — told and discourst unto him, from point to point, how he was falne in love with a gentlewoman that was married to one of his profession ;

discovered her dwelling and the house ; and for that he was unacquainted with the woman, and a man little experienced in love matters, he required his favour to further him with his advise. Mutio, at this motion, was stung to the hart, knowing it was his wife hee was fallen in love withall ; yet to conceale the matter, and to experience his wive's chastity, and that if she plaide false, he might be revengde on them both, he dissembled the matter, and answered, that he knewe the woman very well, and commended her highly ; but saide she had a churle to her husband, and therefore he thought shee would bee the more tractable. Trie her, man, quoth hee ; fainte hart never woone fairelady ; and if shee will not be brought to the bent of your bowe, I will provide such a potion as shall dispatch all to your owne content ; and to give you further instructions for oportunitie, knowe that her husband is foorth every afternoone from three till sixe. Thus farre I have advised you, because I pittie your passions, as myselfe being once a lover ; but now I charge thee, reveale it to none whomsoever, least it doo disparage my credit to meddle in amorous matters. The yong gentleman not onely promised all carefull secrecy, but gave him harty thanks for his good counsell, promising to meete him there the next day, and tell him what newes. Then hee left the old man, who was almost mad for feare his wife any way should play false. He saw, by experience, brave men came to besiege the castle ; and seeing it was in a woman's custodie, and had so weake a governor as himselfe, he doubted it would in time be delivered up ; which feare made him almost franticke, yet he driude of the time in great torment, till he might heare from his rival. Lionello, he hastes him home, and sutes him in his bravery, and goes downe towards the house of Mutio, where he sees her at her windowe, whome he courted with a passionate looke, with such an humble salute, as shee might perceive how the gentleman was affectionate. Margaretta, looking earnestlye upon him, and noting the perfection of his proportion, accounted him, in her eye, the flower

of all Pisa ; thinkte herselfe fortunate if shee might have him for her freend, to supply those defaultes that she found in Mutio. Sundry times that afternoone he past by her window, and he cast not up more loving lookes than he received gracious favours : which did so incourage him, that the next daye, betweene three and sixe, hee went to the house, and, knocking at the doore, desired to speake with the mistris of the house, who, hearing by her maid's description what he was, commaunded him to come in, where she interteined him with all courtesie.

The youth that never before had given the attempt to covet a ladye, began his exordium with a blushe ; and yet went forward so well, that hee discourst unto her howe hee loved her, and that if it might please her so to accept of his service, as of a freende ever vowde in all dutye to bee at her commaunde, the care of her honour should bee deerer to him then his life, and hee would bee ready to prise her discontent with his bloud at all times.

The gentlewoman was a little coye, but before they part they concluded that the next day, at foure of the clock, hee should come thither and eate a pound of cherries, which was resolved on with a *succado des labras*, and so, with a loath to depart, they tooke their leaves. Lionello, as joyfull a man as might be, hyed him to the church to meete his olde doctor, where hee found him in his olde walke. What newes, syr ? quoth Mutio. How have you sped ? Even as I can wishe, quoth Lionello ; for I have been with my mistrisse, and have found her so tr[a]ctable, that I hope to make the olde peasant, her husband, looke broad-headed by a paire of browantlers. How deepe this strooke into Mutio's hart, let them imagine that can conjecture what jelousie is ; insomuch that the olde doctor askte when should be the time. Mary, quoth Lionello, to-morrow at foure of the clocke in the afternoone ; and then, maister doctor, quoth hee, will I dub the olde squire knight of the forked order.

Thus they passed on in chat, till it grew late ; and then Lyonello went home to his lodging, and Mutio to his house, covering all his sorrowes with a merrye countenance, with full resolution to revenge them both the next day with extremitie. He past the night as patiently as he could, and the next day after dinner awaye hee went, watching when it should bee four of the clocke. At the houre justly came Lyonello, and was intertained with all curtesie : but scarce had they kist, ere the maide cried out to her mistresse that her maister was at the doore ; for he hasted, knowing that a horne was but a litle while in grafting. Margaret, at this alarum, was amazed ; and yet, for a shifte, chopt Lyonello into a great drie-fatte* full of feathers, and sat her downe close to her woorke. By that came Mutio in blowing ; and, as though hee came to looke somewhat in haste, called for the keyes of his chambers, and looked in everye place, searching so narrowlye in everye corner of the house, that he left not the very privie unsearcht. Seeing he could not finde him, hee saide nothing ; but, fayning himselfe not well at ease, staide at home, so that poor Lyonello was faine to staye in the drifatte till the olde churle was in bed with his wife ; and then the maide let him out at a backe doore, who went home with a flea in his eare to his lodging.

Well, the next day he went againe to meete his doctor, whome hee found in his woonted walke. What newes, quoth Mutio ? Howe have you sped ? A poxe of the olde slave, quoth Lyonello ; I was no sooner in, and had given my mistrisse one kisse, but the jealous asse was at the doore : the maide spied him, and cried, *her maister !* so that the poore gentlewoman, for very shifte, was faine to put me in a driefatte of

* What can Malone mean by saying, that in this tale there is no trace of the basket ? See Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 210. The boasting of Lionello that he would place horns on Mutio, exactly tallies with Falstaff's boast to Ford, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor." See also the present volume, p. 20.

feathers that stooode in an olde chamber, and there I was faine to tarrie while he was in bed and asleepe, and then the maide let me out, and I departed.

But it is no matter ; 'twas but a chaunce, and I hope to crye quittance with him ere it be long. As how, quoth Mutio ? Marry thus, quoth Lionello : she sent me woord by her maide this daye, that upon Thursday next the olde churle suppeth with a patient of his a mile out of Pisa, and then I feare not but to quitte him for all. It is well, quoth Mutio ; fortune bee your freende. I thanke you, quoth Lionello ; and so after a little more prattle they departed.

To bee shorte, Thursdays came ; and about sixe of the clocke foorth goes Mutio no further then a freendes house of his, from whence hee might descrye who went into his house. Straight hee sawe Lionello enter in ; and after goes hee, insomuche that hee was scarcelye sitten downe before the mayde cryed out againe, *my maister comes*. The good-wife that before had provided for afterclaps, had found out a privie place between two seelings of a plauncher, and there she thrust Lionello ; and her husband came sweting. What news, quoth shee, drives you home againe so soone, husband ? Marry, sweete wife, quoth he, a fearefull dreame that I had this night, which came to my remembrance, and that was this : Methought there was a villeine that came secretly into my house with a naked poinard in his hand, and hid himselfe ; but I could not finde the place : with that mine nose bled, and I came backe ; and by the grace of God, I will seeke every corner in the house for the quiet of my minde. Marry, I pray you doo, husband, quoth she. With that he lockt in all the doors and began to search every chamber, every hole, every chest, every tub, the very well ;* he stabd every featherbed through, and made havocke,

* This enumeration of the different places that were ransacked is very similar to that put into the mouth of Sir Hugh Evans on a like occasion in the "Merry Wives of Windsor."

like a mad man, which made him thinke all was in vaine, and hee began to blame his eies that thought they saw that which they did not. Upon this he rest halfe lunaticke, and all night he was very wakefull; that towards the morning he fell into a dead sleepe, and then was Lionello conveighed away.

In the morning when Mutio wakened, hee thought how by no means hee should be able to take Lyonello tardy; yet he laid in his head a most dangerous plot, and that was this. Wife, quoth he, I must the next Monday ride to Vycensa to visit an olde patient of mine; till my returne, which will be some ten dayes, I will have thee stayer at our little graunge house in the countrey. Marry, very well content, husband, quoth she: with that he kist her, and was verie pleasant, as though he had suspected nothing, and away hee flinges to the church, where he meetes Lionello. What sir, quoth he, what newes? Is your mistresse yours in possession? No, a plague of the old slave, quoth he: I think he is either a witch, or els woorkes by magick: for I can no sooner enter in the doores, but he is at my backe, and so he was againe yesternight; for I was not warme in my seate before the maide cried, *my maister comes*; and then was the poore soule faine to conveigh me betweene two seelings of a chamber in a fit place for the purpose: wher I laught hartely to myself too see how he sought every corner, ransackt every tub, and stabd every featherbed; but in vaine,—I was safe enough till the morning, and then when he was fast asleepe, I lept out. Fortune frowns on you, quoth Mutio: I, but I hope, quoth Lionello, this is the last time, and now shee will begin to smile; for on Monday next he rides to Vicenza, and his wife lyes at a grange house a little of the towne, and there in his absence I will revenge all forepassed misfortunes. God send it be so, quoth Mutio, and so took his leave. These two lovers longed for Monday, and at last it came. Early in the morning Mutio horst himselfe, and his wife, his maide, and a man, and no more, and away he rides to his grange house; where after he

had brok his fast, he took his leave, and away towards Vicenza. He rode not far ere by a false way he returned into a thicket, and there with a company of cuntry peasants lay in an ambuscade to take the young gentleman. In the afternoon comes Lionello gallopping ; and as soon as he came within sight of the house, he sent back his horse by his boy, and went easily afoot, and there at the very entry was entertained by Margaret, who led him up the staires, and convaidd him into her bedchamber, saying he was welcome into so mean a cottage : but, quoth she, now I hope fortune will not envy the purity of our loves. Alas, alas, mistris, cried the maid, heer is my maister, and 100 men with him, with bils and staves. We are betraid, quoth Lionel, and I am but a dead man.* Feare not, quoth she, but follow me ; and straight she carried him downe into a lowe parlor, where stooode an old rotten chest full of writings. She put him into that, and covered him with olde papers and evidences, and went to the gate to meet her husband. Why, signor Mutio, what means this hurly burly, quoth she? Vile and shameless strumpet as thou art, thou shalt know by and by, quoth he. Where is thy love? All we have watcht him and seen him enter in : now, quoth he, shal neither thy tub of feathers, nor thy seeling serve, for perish he shall with fire, or els fall into my hands. Doo thy worst, jealous foole, quoth she ; I ask thee no favour. With that in a rage he beset the house round, and then set fire on it. Oh ! in what a perplexitie was poore Lionello, that was shut in a chest, and the fire about his eares? And how was Margaret passionat, that knew her lover in such danger? Yet she made light of the matter, and as one in a rage called her maid to her and said : Come on, wench ; seeing thy maister mad with jelousie hath set the house and al my living on fire, I will be revengd upon him ; help me heer to lift this old chest where

* This is the very same expression that Mrs. Page uses to Falstaff in a similar emergency. See the present volume, p. 37.

all his writings and deeds are ; let that burne first ; and as soon as I see that one fire, I will walk towards my freends, for the old foole will be beggard, and I will refuse him. Mutio, that knew al his obligations and statutes lay there, puld her back, and bad two of his men carry the chest into the feeld, and see it were safe ; himself standing by and seeing his house burnd downe, sticke and stone. Then quieted in his minde, he went home with his wife, and began to flatter her, thinking assuredly that he had burnd her paramour ; causing his chest to be carried in a cart to his house at Pisa. Margaret impatient went to her mothers, and complained to her and to her brethern of the jealousie of her husband ; who maintained her it be true, and desired but a daies respite to proove it. Wel, hee was bidden to supper the next night at her mothers, she thinking to make her daughter and him frends againe. In the meane time, he to his woonted walk in the church, and there *præter expectationem* he found Lionello walking. Wondering at this, he straight enquires, what newes ? What newes, maister doctor, quoth he, and he fell in a great laughing : in faith yesterday I scapt a scouring ; for, syrrha, I went to the grange house, where I was appointed to come, and I was no sooner gotten up the chamber, but the magicall villeine her husband beset the house with bils and staves, and that he might be sure no seeling nor corner should shrowde me, he set the house on fire, and so burnt it down to the ground. Why, quoth Mutio, and how did you escape ? Alas, quoth he, wel fare a woman's wit ! She conveyed me into an old chest ful of writings, which she knew her husband durst not burne ; and so was I saved and brought to Pisa, and yesternight by her maide let home to my lodging. This, quoth he, is the pleasantest jest that ever I heard ; and upon this I have a sute to you. I am this night bidden foorth to supper ; you shall be my guest : onely I will crave so much favour, as after supper for a pleasant sporte to make relation what successe you have had in your loves. For that I will not sticke,

quothe he ; and so he caried Lionello to his mother-in-lawes house with him, and discovered to his wives brethren who he was, and how at supper he would disclose the whole matter : for, quoth he, he knowes not that I am Margarets husband. At this all the brethren bad him welcome, and so did the mother to ; and Margaret she was kept out of sight. Supper-time being come, they fell to their victals, and Lionello was carrowst unto by Mutio, who was very pleasant, to draw him to a merry humor, that he might to the ful discourse the effect and fortunes of his love. Supper being ended, Mutio requested him to tel to the gentleman what had hapned between him and his mistresse. Lionello with a smiling countenance began to describe his mistresse, the house and street where she dwelt, how he fell in love with her, and how he used the counsell of this doctor, who in al his affaires was his secretarye. Margaret heard all this with a greate feare ; and when he came at the last point, she caused a cup of wine to be given him by one of her sisters, wherein was a ring that he had given Margaret. As he had told how he escapt burning, and was ready to confirme all for a troth, the gentlewoman drunke to him ; who, taking the cup, and seing the ring, having a quick wit and a reaching head, spide the fetch, and perceived that all this while this was his lovers husband, to whome hee had revealed these escapes. At this drinking the wine, and swallowing the ring into his mouth, he went forward : Gentlemen, quoth he, how like you of my loves and my fortunes ? Wel, quoth the gentlemen ; I pray you is it true ? As true, quoth he, as if I would be so simple as to reveal what I did to Margarets husband : for know you, gentlemen, that I knew this Mutio to be her husband whom I notified to be my lover ; and for that he was generally known through Pisa to be a jealous fool, therefore with these tales I brought him into this paradise,* which indeed are follies of mine own braine ; for

* The same phrase is used by Mrs. Quickly, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor."

trust me by the faith of a gentleman, I never spake to the woman, was never in her companye, neither doo I know her if I see her. At this they all fell in a laughing at Mutio, who was ashamde that Lionello had so scoft him : but all was well—they were made friends; but the jest went so to his hart, that he shortly after died, and Lionello enjoyed the ladye : and for that they two were the death of the old man, now are they plagued in purgatory, and he whips them with nettles.

No. VI.

[I print the following tale from a very curious and rare work, entitled, "Westward for Smelts," 4to., Lond., 1620; the only copy of which I have ever seen is in Trinity College Library, Cambridge. Steevens mentions an earlier copy, of the date of 1603, but, not finding any notice elsewhere of such an edition, and there being nothing in the Cambridge copy to indicate that it is a reprint, I am inclined to think that Steevens must have fallen into an error. It was entered in the books of the Stationers' Company in January, 1619-20. I insert the present tale in this place in deference to the opinion of Malone, who thinks "it probably led Shakespeare to lay the scene of Falstaff's love adventures at Windsor." See Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vol. viii., p. 3.]

The Fishwife's Tale of Brainford.

In Windsor, not long agoe, dwelt a sumpter man, who had to wife a very faire (but something wanton) creature, ouer whom (not without cause) he was something iealous, yet had hee neuer any prooffe of her inconstancie ; but he feared he was, or should be a cuckold, and therefore preuented it so much as he could by restraining her libertie ; but this did but set an edge to her wanton appetite, and was a prouocatiue to her lust (for what women are restrained from they desire), for long hee could not hold his watchfull eye ouer her, 'cause his businesse call'd him away, which alway lay farre from home. He being to depart from home, bethought himselfe what he were best to do ; put another in trust with his wife he durst not (for no greater shame is there to a man then to be knowne iealous

ouer his wife); himselfe could tarry no longer at home for fear of losing his place, and then his liuing was gone: thus was hee troubled in minde, not knowing what to doe. Now he repented himselfe that he had vsed his wife so ill, which had giuen her cause to hate him, and procure him a mischiefe, for he saw that he had no other way now to take, but to put his credit into his wiues hands; therefore, the day and night before he went from home, he vsed her extraordinary kindly, making more on her then the first day they were married. His wife maruelled at this suddaine change, and, though she liked this vsage well, yet she thought neuer the better of him in her heart, and in her outward carriage bare her selfe as before, which was euer modestly in his sight. The morning being come that he was to depart from home (after many sweet kisses and kinde embraces giuen him), he said, Sweet honey, I cannot blame thee that thou takest my vsage heretofore vnkindly; but if thou knewest (as I meane to shew thee) what my intent was, thou wilt change that bad thought for a better liking of me. Know then, my loue, that I vsed thee thus strangely, to know how deepe thy loue was settled on me (for to vse a friend frowardly, tryes her loue, in forbearance of his iniuries, and in seeking to please him), which I haue found by prooffe immouable. Oh, my more then deare wife, thy loue is fixed sure on me, and not to be remoued by any crosse whatsoever. Thus did hee seeke to vnsnare himselfe, but was caught faster, for his wife, perceiuing his iealousie, vowed to be reuenged, and giue him good and sufficient cause to thinke himselfe a cuckolde; and, with very ioy to see him creepe to her after this manner, she let fall a few teares, which proceeded rather of inward laughter then any griefe. Hee seeing this, thought they proceeded from pure loue, yet did hee not thorowly trust her, but minded to return ere she was aware of him. To be short, they broke their fasts together, and louingly parted. His wife, beeing glad of this, sent for a woman in the towne, one that was the procurer of her friend, to whom she told all that had hapned

betweene her husband and her selfe, requesting her in all haste to giue her friend notice that her husband was now from home, and that shee would meete him when and wheresoeuer he pleased. The old woman, glad of this, gaue her loue to vnderstand of this good hap, who soone met her at a place in the towne, where they vsually met, where they plumed the sumpter-man's cap. There she gaue the old woman a key which would open her doore, by which meanes shee might come to the speech of her at any time of the night without knocking, so carefull was she to keepe her selfe cleere and spotlesse in the eyes of her neighbours, who would not haue thought well of her, if they had heard noise at her doore in the night, and her husband from home. Hauing passed the time away in louing complements, they parted, each going their seuerall wayes, not any one of her neighbours mistrusting her, she bare her selfe so cunningly modest. Her husband, being on his iourney, following his sumpter-horse, thought his wife at home, working like a good huswife (when, perchance, she was following a station she tooke more delight in then he, poore man, did in his) ; yet put he no more trust in her than he was forced to doe, for hee dispatches his businesse so soone as hee could, and returned three dayes sooner then he promised her. When he came home he knocked at the doore: there might he knocke long enough, for his wife, who was knocking the wintner's pots with her loue. He, hauing no answere, began to curse and ban, bidding a pope on all women. His neighbours began to perswade him, telling him that she went but new forth, and would returne suddenly againe ; and iust at that instant came she homeward, not knowing her good man was returned, for she had appointed the old woman to come and call her that night. Seeing her husband, you may iudge what a taking this poore woman was in: back she durst not goe, for that would haue sharpened his rage ; and, if shee went forward, she was sure of some seuerer punishment ; yet, taking courage, on she went. Her husband entertained her with halfe a doozen gadding

queans, and such like words, and she excused her selfe so well as she could. But, to be briefe, in a doores they went: then made he the doore fast, and came to her (who was almost dead with feare that her close play now would lie descride), saying, Thou wretch, long time haue I doubted this looseness in thy life, which I now haue plaine prooffe of by thy gadding in my absence, and doe thou at this present looke for no other thing at my hands then reward fit for so vilde a creature as a whore is. At these words she would haue skreeked out; but he stopped her mouth, pulling withall a rusty dagger from his side, vowing to scowre it with her blood, if shee did but offer to open her mouth. She, poore creature, forced more with feare then with duty, held her peace, while hee bound her to a post hard by the dore, vowing she should stand there all night, to coole her hot blood. Hauing done this, about ten of the clock, he went to bed, telling her that he meant not to sleepe, but watch her if she durst once open her mouth; but he was better then his word, though hee held it not, for he was no sooner in bed but he fell fast asleepe, being wearied with riding. Long had not he beene so, but the old woman came and opened the dore with the key that the sumpter-man's wife had giuen her, and was going to the bed which the sumpter-man lay vpon to call his wife; but, as she passed by, the poor woman that was bound to her good behauiour, call'd her by name (yet very softly), saying, Mother Ione, I am heere, mother Ione, pray goe no further, and speake softly, for my husband, mother Ione, is a bed. This good old woman went to her, and, finding her bound, asked her the cause; to whom the afflicted wife related (with still speech, which is contrary to women's nature) euery circumstance, for she knew her husband fast enough for three houres. Is that all? said the old woman; then feare not but you shal enioy your friend's bed: with that she vnloosed her. The sumpter-man's wife maruelled what she meant to doe, saying, Mother, what meane you? this is not the way that I must take to cleere my selfe. Alas,

should he wake and finde me gone to-morrow, he will kill mee in his rage. Content you, said the old wife, I will bide the brunt of all ; and heere will I stand tyed to this post till you returne, which I pray let be so soone as you can. This wanton wife praised her counsell, and imbraces the same, and leauing the old woman bound (as she desired) in her place, she went to her lusty louer, who long time had expected her, to whom she related her husband's vnluckie comming home, her ill vsage, and the old woman's kindnesse ; for all which he was sorrie, but could not mend, onely hee promised to reward this kinde woman, call'd Mother Jone : so leauing that talke they fell to other.

The sumpter-man, who could not soundly sleepe, because still he dreamed of hornes and cuckolds, wakened not long after his wife was gone, and, being wakened, he fell to talking after this manner : Now, you queene, is it good gadding ? is your hote bloud cooled yet with cold ayre ? Will your insatiable desires be allayed with hunger and cold ? If they be not, thou arrant wretch, I will tye thee thus up, not onely nine dayes, but nineteene times nine dayes, till thou hast lost this hote and damnable pride of thine. Ile doo't, I will, I sweare I will. This good old woman, hearing him rayle thus frantickly, wished (with all her heart) her selfe out of doores, and his wife in her old place. Shee durst not speake to him, for feare she should be knowne by her speech to bee another, and not his wife ; and hee lay still calling to her, asking if her hote desires were cooled. At length hee, hearing her make no answere, thought her to be sullen, and bid her speak to him, or else she should repent it (yet durst not the old wife speake.) He, hearing no speech, rose vp, and took his knife, swearing hee would marke her for a whore, and with those words he ranne to her, and cut her ouer the nose ; all this the old woman indured quietly, knowing her words would haue but increased her punishment. To bed went he againe, with such words as hee vsed before, saying that, since her bloud would not coole,

he would let it out. Hauing lyen a while, he fell asleepe, leauing old Ione bleeding at nose, where shee stood till three of the clocke in the morning, at which time this honest lasse (the sumpter-man's wife) came home: when she had quietly opened the doore, she went to the old woman, asking her how shee had sped. Marry, quoth shee, as I would wish my enemies to speed—ill! I pray vnbinde me, or I shall bleed to death. The good wife was sorry to heare that she had receiued such hurt, but fane gladde that it did not happen vnto her selfe; so, vnbinding her, she stood in her place. Homeward went the old woman, bethinking her selfe all the way how she might excuse that hurt to her husband. At last she had one (for excuses are neuer further off women then their apron strings), which was this — she went home to her husband, who was a mason, and went euery morning betimes to worke out of the towne; him she calleth, telling him it was time to goe to worke. The silly man rose, and, being ready to goe, he missed a chisell (which his wife had hid), and went vp and downe groping for it in the darke, praying his wife to helpe him to looke it. She made as she had sought for it, but, instead of that, she gaue him a sharpe knife (which a butcher had brought to grinding); he, catching at this suddenly (as one being in haste), cut all his fingers, so that with anger he threw the knife to the earth, cursing his wife that gaue it him. Presently, vpon y^e fall of the knife, she cryed out that shee was hurt. The mason, being amazed, went and lighted a candle, and, returning, he found his wife's nose cut. The silly man (perswading himselfe that hee had done it with hurling the knife) intreated her to forgiue him, for he protested that hee thought her no hurt when hee did it; then fetched he a surgeon, who cunningly stitched it vp, that it was little whole in a short time. The sumpter-man all this while did thinke how he was beguiled, who, when he was awaked, lighted a candle to see what hurt he had done his wife in his rage. He comming neere her, and seeing her face whole, stood in a

maze, not knowing what to thinke on it, for he was sure that he had cut her nose. His wife, seeing him stand in this maner, asked him what he did ayle, and why he gazed so on her, as though he knew her not. Pardon mee, wife, quoth he, for this night hath a miracle beene wrought; I doe see plainly that the heauens will not suffer the innocent to suffer harme. Then fetched hee his knife, which was all bloody, saying, Deare wife, with this knife did I giue thee, this present night, a wound on the face, the which, most miraculously, is whole, which is a signe thou art free and spotlesse, and so will I euer hold thee. His wife said little (for feare of laughing), onely she said she knew heauen would defend the innocent; so they went to bed louingly together, he vowing neuer to thinke amisse on her. So had she more libertie then before, and the old woman had gold for her wound, which wound was so well cured (I thanke God!) that you can scarce see it on my nose. Hereat they all laughed, saying she had told a good tale for her selfe; at which she bit her lip, to thinke how she was so very a foole to betray her selfe. But, knowing that excuses would but make her more suspected, she held her tongue, giuing the next leaue to speake.

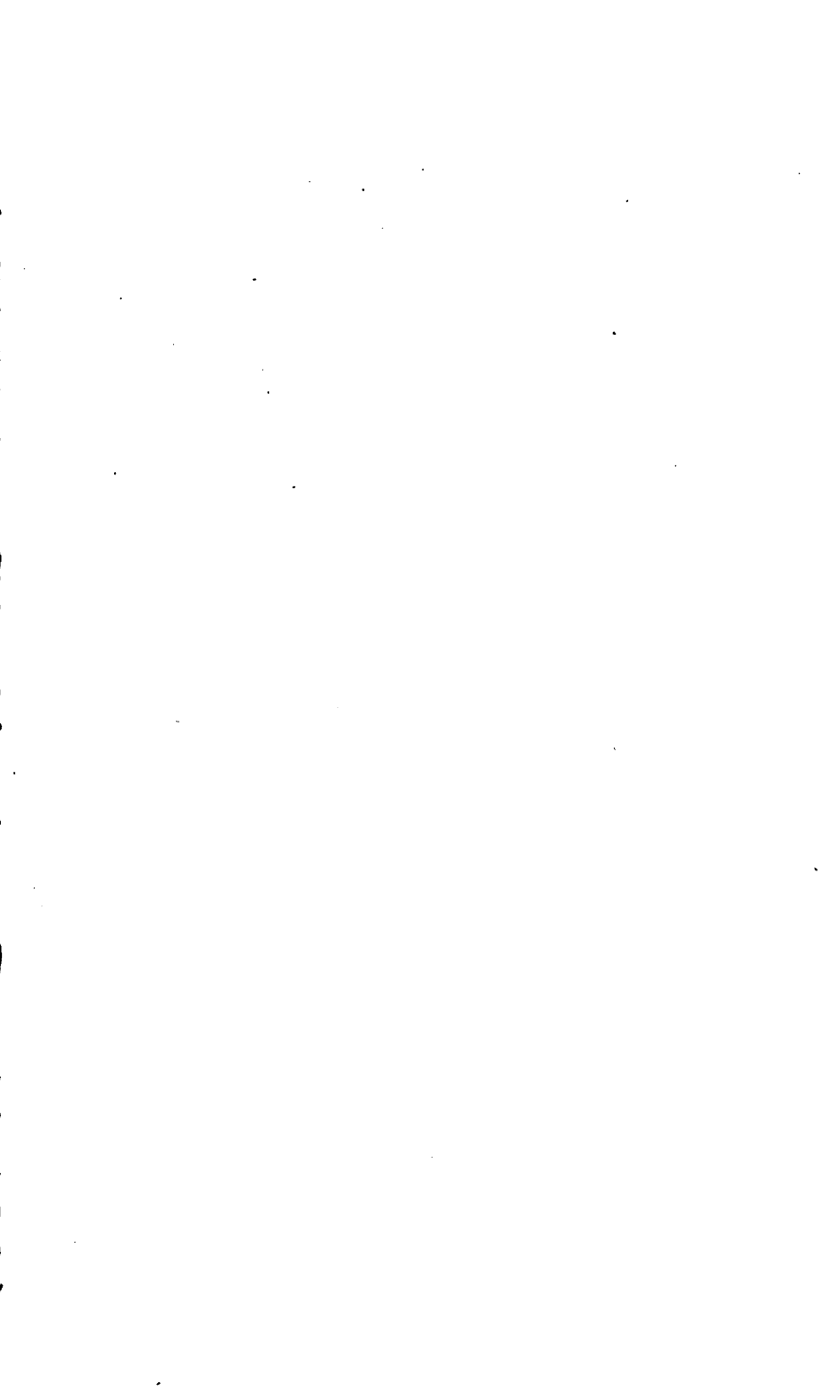
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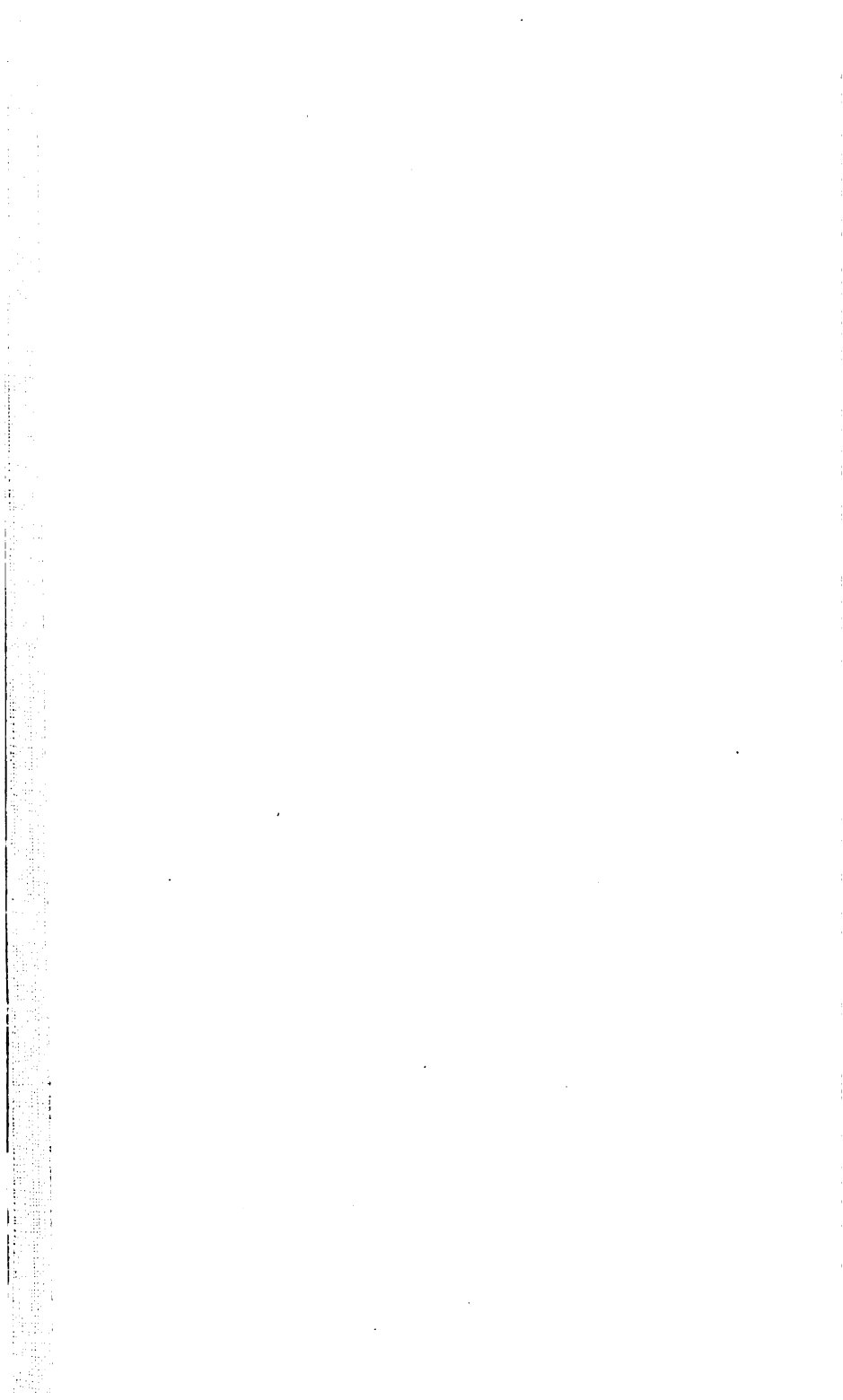
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